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PEDESTRIAN ON THE MARCH

PEDESTRIAN REMINISCENCE



FISHERMEN OF NORMANDY.

WITH

SKETCHES OF COUNTRY LIFE

BY

SYLVANUS.

PEDESTRIAN

AND OTHER

REMINISCENCES

AT HOME AND ABROAD:

WITH

SKETCHES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

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BY SYLVANUS.

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PREFACE.

THE letters, of which this volume is composed, were written to a valued friend of the author's, during a pedestrian tour through some of the French provinces; and are nearly word for word as originally sent through the post. He then wrote solely for one person's amusement, but, when all were completed, he was induced (through the, no doubt, flattering partiality of that friendship,) to think they might not be unacceptable to the public, in this age of "time killing and ennui," which he sincerely hopes may prove the case.

La Vendée,
December, 1845.

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PEDESTRIAN REMINISCENCES.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTORY. — CONTEMPLATED EXCURSION. — INDEPENDENCE OF A PEDESTRIAN. — HIS KNAPSACK AND OUTFIT. — BROTHER WAYFARERS. — THE FOOT-PATH. — THE RIVER WHARFE. — HAREWOOD BRIDGE. — REMINISCENCE OF BOLTON. — "THE INN." — GOOD CHEER. — THE INN KITCHEN. — A CONTRAST. — A MORNING SCENE. — ART AND NATURE.

The last day in May, 1845.

I AM just preparing for a walking excursion through some of the northern parts of France, a pleasure I have long promised myself whenever time and opportunity should sufficiently serve. Both of these "invincibles" I have at all events anticipated, in the berth. I am booked for to-morrow across the Channel. If you are therefore inclined for a rambling desultory letter, occasionally as I halt for repose and refreshment, I shall be delighted to write to you an account of my adventures, and thereby have you for an ima-

ginary companion. I shall tell you what I see and think, as I stroll, without either guide or compass, through the country, and if a reminiscence of former days and rambles should cross my mind, I shall give it you in my own style. Retaining fancy on our side, we "will paint the landscape twice, nor lose one sweet taste of this sweet world." She can "embroider nature's veil," and shall be my only "piecer out," and hand-book.

As I am writing solely for your perusal, and I hope amusement, I shall be careless of the evenness of my "yarn," or rather of its "odds and ends:" they may perhaps serve their brief moment in destroying an hour when deprived of some keener weapon, and surely bind the "forget-me-nots" in your bouquet.

In a genuine love for the footpath, or a little errantry "à pied," I yield to no man. The very thought of a long country walk, when the dew is on the ground, or the hoar frost glistens in the clear sharp wintry day, sets the blood rioting in my veins. What a glow comes over you as you briskly tread the crisp and spangled mead! What a glorious breeze sweeps the wold! How light, how joyous, how *well* you feel as you leave the town far behind, and inhale the pure invigorating gale. There are, truly, few things that I remember under the name of real unalloyed enjoyment in my past life, that can equal the relish I always felt on a pedestrian excur-

sion, or in its most pleasing recollection. Varied, indeed, have they been, from first to last, leaving the different scenes and faces, kind treatment, and adventures; every thing, in fact, but regret in their reminiscence. The "life and freshness of the mountain air," peace of mind, and robust health have been mine, as I have wended my solitary delighted way, with sound refreshing sleep at my road-side bivouac.

That charming writer, Thomas Colley Grattan, in his "Highways and Byways," gave me an early "itching" for the knapsack and sturdy stick, in preference to all other modes of travelling for pleasure. If time is not an object, perfect independence will be your reward (no slight boon I take it). Coaches full and overturned, lame horses, the coroner's 'quest, and General Pasley, are not in your "carte du jour." You get up when you choose—you stay as long as you think proper wherever you may be—you may wait till the shower is over—require no Seidlitz or other stimulant. You eat like an ostrich, and walk off all dyspepsia.

I prefer this sort of locomotion to being sent spinning in the air, by the "Fire King,"—or stuffed in the "Rotonde," amidst odours of garlic and tobacco; or even to the risk attending a favourite nag on a long journey, with its uncertain accommodation, besides the incessant personal care of him.

In the toilette I adopt for "a walking gentleman," I wear a short, loose, grey frock coat, sufficiently

decent to take my seat at a table d'hôte, being also stout, and easy enough for all weathers. I particularly inculcate strong shoes and gaiters, Scotch shepherd's plaid trousers, and a good beaver, on which the storm may beat and come again, whereat your silken chapeaus are soon disconcerted. In my knapsack (a Swiss one covered with the skin of a chamois),—I have three shirts, as many pairs of stockings, several items in collars, cravats, and pocket handkerchiefs, with an extra pair of light shoes, fit for slippers or a stroll, after I have found my quarters for the night. I have a large silk umbrella in a case, that I sling over my shoulder as a precautionary friend, and what does a man want more? with his proper baggage forwarded from time to time, if he chooses to remain where it is needful. I have a small dressing-case, with a quire of paper, pens, and ink in my knapsack, of the latter of which I hope to give you the benefit.

In strolling over the country, you may gather constant information and amusement, if you will, from every brother wayfarer. Itinerants by choice or profession seem, from the time they have for reverie and reflection, to be more cheerful and conversible than your railway and other travellers, with a touch of nature in their composition refreshing in the extreme.

You leave the king's highway, jump the stile that leads you by a narrow continuous footpath across a

series of meadows, full of cattle, fields of corn as high as your shoulder, over the rabbit warren, by the sides of hedge rows, the river, and park paling, till you come upon the next village, the approach to which is indicated by the curling smoke, ascending amidst the trees, above which rises the fine old tapering spire.

Just such a walk as this have I often taken from Harrogate to Thorp arch. The stile is near Plumpton, and you may find all the varieties I have named, with a most glorious prospect on all sides, as you cross the fields to Spofforth. A more lovely country does not exist than all that fertilised by the "Wharfe," the most beautiful river for its size, and flowing amongst scenes the most delicious and diversified, to be found in any part of England, or even Europe. From Harewood Bridge (or even Tadcaster) to Skipton, by Ilkley, Ottley, Bolton, and Barden Tower, the Wharfe winds amongst a succession of beauties. Meadows of deepest soil, on which beef is produced worthy of the name, with alternate amphibious woods, half on land, half in water, grass and waterfalls complete the changing scene. The deer park and manor house of the squire,—the farmstead and comfortable dwelling of the yeoman, with the neat, yet humble cottage of the labourer, are all in the back-ground of this unrivalled picture.

When you get to Bolton Bridge to dine, and find a room in an inn, furnished with easy chairs, pictures,

and Turkey carpet, with windows opening upon a lawn, across which, through vistas of laurel, rhododendron, and roses, you see the lovely prospect and distant hills, you fancy you have mistaken the hotel, and got into the Duke's shooting-box; but if you ring the bell, and order dinner, the very neatest of all country lasses will bring a trout, fresh from the stream, weighing a couple of pounds, place a chicken, boiled home-cured bacon, with beans and parsley and butter before you, (which if of the true faith you will ask for), and with a smile, as she hands you the bread, inquire if you drink ale, or water? *I* say the latter, and a pint of old port afterwards, which sip with open windows, and half-closed eyes in delicious languor, ruminating on your walk and its delights, taking your first glass to the health of "absent friends."

Tell me not of chariots and phaetons, or any other conveyance, as aids for seeing these things, but your feet: you cannot get at them by the paths I have described by any other mode, and it is more idleness than inability that stops the pedestrian. No gout, no head-ache, no blue devils have I on a walk; I have had all these under different locomotion, and find myself in my prime, (which I am flatteringly made to believe I have reached, that is, fit for killing I take it), quite as able, and far more willing to walk than ever, for which a good digestion most sincerely proffers its gratitude.

I cannot quit this most beautiful of all beautiful spots, and most unique of country inns, without one lingering reminiscence. Before you retire to the chamber allotted you for the night, at "the Bridge," (one replete with comforts and cleanliness), pull off your shoes and gaiters in the kitchen, if only to get a sight of it. The white stone floor and hearth are swept and sanded for the evening. The large range, boiler, oven, and fire, are as bright as the sun just setting over Barden Tower. The long plane tree table and dresser are much whiter than this paper. The bacon and hams, encrusted with flour and salt, hang in goodly rows high above your head. The dish-covers, crockery, and warming-pan, brilliantly garnish the walls: the old-fashioned clock is ticking in the corner. A large "horse" is before the fire, with a pair of sheets on his back, intended for your slightly fatigued limbs, and the bonny tidy lass ironing at a small side table a few of her mistress's caps, and her own. I have been in a few of the kitchens in France, and have *seen* the dreadful dens, the bearded, night-capped cook, taking a pinch of pepper for your cutlet, after having performed a similar civility to his nose. The fowl, or "half gigot" of mutton, roasting within *one* inch of the floor, before a few crackling sticks — and *that* floor! Enough, enough; go into the kitchen at Bolton Bridge by all means, but keep out of all in France, if you wish even a twenty-miles walk to give you the slightest appetite,

the former will in every thing you see increase it, the latter produce the "mal de terre" if you persevere. But thank God we are yet at Bolton in our mind's eye. What a scene awaits you in the morning, as you shake off the deep sleep of a pedestrian, and prepare for the ramble before you, one of the most lovely, for its extent, to be found in the whole world. You are awoke by that peculiarly pleasing sound, the whetting of a scythe under your windows. The gardener is shaving the lawn of its week's growth of ambrosial beard, not blue, but beautifully green, and bathed in the healthy sweat of night. Every blade is loaded with dew; the sun is streaming over the eastern hills and flowing Wharfe, fresh from the ocean. The feathered "Persianis" of the woods are in full melodious concert: the delicious notes you hear come from throats nearly as sweet and clear as that most charming of all human cantatrices. The fine large meadow before you is one sheet of lightest vapour, — it dances for an instant on the buttercups and cowslips, then leaves the grateful herbage refreshed and cool, for the herds of short-horns, and "the little Alderney" that will supply the cream for your breakfast.

How cheerful, how lighthearted, how grateful to God, do you feel for being permitted to take part in this glorious world, as you throw your bare chest out of the window and gaze upon the scene before you.

"Man maketh troubles and disquieteth himself in

vain," on many points, when the knapsack and love of the country would effectually prevent them. Ambition, excitement, pleasure in the hive, *can* not give you the exquisite feeling you experience as you indulge in this early morning view; and I'll defy you to discuss the broiled ham, eggs, (and porridge, if you are of our persuasion,) which the pretty lass, meeting you on the lawn, tells you is "waiting."

"In the beginning," every breathing thing was meant for nature and nature's habits:—an unfortunate propensity for fruit in the earliest fair dame on record, completely altered the "carte" intended for our fare and happiness. Then came le marchand des modes, superseding the primitive fig leaf, and covering our hides with skins in addition to our own. So they went on, till Stultz and "dentelles de Flandres" have completely got the day. Every thing is artful in the extreme, from the "chemin de fer" to dyeing the whiskers, — night becomes day, and the Polka rules the court, all to be dated from the cranching of an apple. Still, affection for the dear, beneficent old dame is bred in the bone of man; her joys and maternal assistance come to his aid, when those of art have left him crippled like a wreck on the ocean of Fashion, after the action of a London season or two, venison, and chateau margaux, have hulled him between "wind and water." His nerves are shot away, —his spirits consumed, he must strike, and careen his shattered bark under the genial air and early hours

of the country. Then it is that the contrasts of Babylon and the scenes I have so inadequately described come in greatest force. How much better to enjoy them with a toe ignorant of gout, and a stomach in which indigestion is unknown; both of which fashionable ailments were never intended for our torment, till we deserted the sweet, amiable, and affectionate old lady, whose praises I so love to sing! In what paths have I followed her. I could take you to her abode in thousands of romantic spots in our own purely sylvan country, that are not appreciated, because you can dispense with a rascally courier, and make yourself understood in your own tongue.

Here is a pretty beginning for a French tour! commencing with a reminiscence that will be rather difficult to obliterate, I fancy, by means of any fare I am likely to meet with. However, if I can amuse you by description, save you the annoyances, and above all, make you believe that you are in rather a good sort of a country where you are, by no means wanting in the picturesque, I need not say how much it will gratify me, as well as give me encouragement to proceed: so, au revoir.

LETTER II.

THE VOYAGE TO HAVRE. — "THE RAINBOW."—THUNDER-STORM. — CUSTOM-HOUSE MINUTENESS. — "RIEN POUR RIEN."— HOTEL DE L'AMIRAUTE. — FRASCATI'S. — FASHIONABLES. — FIRST VISIT TO FRANCE. — BORDEAUX. — THE PYRENEES. — PAU. — PROVINCE OF BEARN. — VINEYARDS. — PAPER AND REALITY. — ROUTE ACROSS FRANCE.

Havre, June 1st, 1845.

THE "Rainbow" is now blowing off her steam, after a very pleasant voyage of about eighteen hours from London to this port. She is large, and fast enough for anything; exceedingly well provided, in having an excellent, worthy commander and crew, good fare, and every comfort. We had a sea like a lake, and eat our dinner with the Dover cliffs close aboard of us. The day was most beautiful, the soft, balmy, delicious breath of the expiring spring blended with the first breeze of summer, and scarcely touched the glittering deep, it was so thin and ether like, and coquetted between the sky and the water, too light to stay with either. The "Rainbow" glided on most smoothly; no colours in the aerial bow from which she took her name, could possibly have been more harmonious than our voyage across the Channel: we had a few very pleasant passengers, and I was really sorry when it was over.

There not being water to enter the dock, we brought up in the roads during a tremendous storm of vivid lightning and heavy thunder, till the morning tide allowed us to do so. The intensity and brilliancy of the flashes made the most distant objects distinctly visible, — the hills, woods, and houses on shore, the vessels at anchor and in the offing, when all was again folded in blinding darkness. The contrast was painful: it was so deep and black, and almost *tangibly* dark, with the crashes over head incessantly following the gleaming fluid. It was a fearful night to follow so serene a day, and an awful hint of our uncertainty, However, we got quite safe into port, and after an absence of ten years, I again set foot in a French town; but the charm of the first landing was gone, never to return! or rather novelty, let me say, for there is little charm in being hustled by those vile human locusts, the hotel commissionaires, who proclaim the virtues of their respective houses in a most annoying bewildering tone; — if you let them get hold of a limb, God help you; you will be torn to pieces, and your luggage taken "nolens volens."

I first went to the custom-house to have my bag and portmanteau thoroughly overhauled, where they made me pay duty on a few squares of sand soap I had with me, and considered as needful as my sponge or razor; but the French douanier thought otherwise, and extracted out of me one franc and some odd centimes, for which he gave me a long

receipt, in the name of all the great authorities. To see two great bearded fellows accoutred à la militaire weighing my few squares of soap with such solemn minuteness, I could not help remarking, I thought would not make the most flattering illustration of a great country. I wonder they do not tax all shirts you have with you beyond the one on your back, for if a square or two of soap is looked upon as a luxury, clean linen is sometimes as rare. However, it is useless complaining, — they have you in a fix if you land in this country, in which the motto is truly, "Rien pour rien."

I went to the Hôtel l'Amirauté on the Quai, amongst a bad lot perhaps the best in Havre, for I remained more than a month, and tried two or three others, before I decided on giving a preference.* It is one of the oldest established hotels, and at present in the possession of very obliging, attentive people; but they are all short of room for the needful apartments, and hosts of tourists. The salon is cooped up in a small dismal court, and the salle-à-manger only sufficiently large to permit the garçons to pass round the planks they call a table.

The dinner is always good, that is, if you consider homœopathic slices of beef, fish, and chicken, good for your peculiar internals. I believe the maître-d'hotel is such an efficient carver, that he could cut

* I finally found the nearest approach to cleanliness and comfort, with every civility, at "Wheeler's" Hotel.

up a snipe, and give every one a taste; if you only got half an eye, or a joint of a toe, you would have your share, and by the way, an equal one of the "bill" into the bargain.

The water here is very good, and many a decanter have I regaled myself with from the fountain in the court; it is peculiarly soft, and clear as crystal; nothing can possibly be more delicious. After seeing my room, I walked to Frascati's on the beach, and tumbled myself head over heels into the sea, to wash away the little fatigue I felt after sleeping in a berth that made my shoulders and elbows fully sensible it was not one of down in which I had turned in and out of. The bathing here is excellent,—you may plunge into twenty feet if you will, as I did. The sea is most delightfully clear at all times, and you have the luxury of warm sea water for your feet after bathing, which produces a very comfortable sensation; it entirely removes the unpleasant flush to the face, from the blood mounting up to it, after being in the cold water. This I never saw provided in England, and greatly recommend it. The price is half a franc for a cabin and towels, with a couple of sous to the attendant, who is a very civil attentive fellow, and whatever month you may arrive in, at Frascati's, you will always find "Auguste" there to wait upon you.

The establishment, built entirely of wood, is

extremely large, and I am told well conducted. They spread a good table d'hôte in the bathing season, and have quite a houseful of the beau monde, from Paris and other parts of France. There were some English too, in great force, starring from the capital, literally hair and fierceness itself. The "Golden Ball," "got up quite regardless of expense," was rolling with the briny swells, and made a great sensation. The first time I landed in France was at Bordeaux, after a pleasant voyage from Dublin, touching at Plymouth, crossing one end of the Bay of Biscay, and sailing up the Gironde and Garonne. Bordeaux is without exception the finest town in France, and I very much fancy, one of the most beautiful I ever saw any where else. The gaiety of the place, the broad and rapid river, the promenades, fine trees, and climate, make it a most delightful residence. The large and handsome theatre, the "bon vin," pretty faces, and cheap living, compared to Havre and other places, all tend to give the palm to this very fine city, which my second visit fully confirmed.

My route from thence was by the river to Marmande, through the wine countries to the Pyrenees, by Tarbes, Pau, the watering places—Bagnéres de Bigorre, &c., all of which have been so minutely and pleasantly described by other tourists, that I shall not attempt a repetition. I thought "Lourdes" the most romantically situated little place in my excursion,

and the Bearnais peasant girls infinitely the best-looking women in the country. My "yarn" is not intended as a hand-book, I shall only stop when I like, and tell you what comes uppermost; if you want the former, are they not to be bought at your bookseller's? Pau is very prettily situated, near the foot of the mountains, with a lovely prospect,—it was crammed with English, who lived anything but sociably as I thought. The men were generally broiling through the long, straight, dusty roads, to and from the "campagne," in search of a quail or two, which they termed "shooting." The women were housed up, to save their complexions from the heat of the sun; and after he has set, when there is no twilight, (the most delicious hour in England, after the heat and cares of the day are departed), all promenade in a place called "the Place," utterly unable to distinguish a feature, when they retire to their various in-door amusements, according to the custom of the country.

It is a lovely country all through the province of Bearn, and well worth seeing indeed. The numerous "gaves," or streams, mountain roads, handsome peasantry with their picturesque costume, comprise a delicious carte for the pedestrian's daily fare. The climate, I fancy, anything but suited to English constitutions; the changes are too great and rapid, from intense heat in summer to piercing cold in

winter,—when the Pyrenees are swept by sudden, terrific storms, and the gentle streams are turned into roaring torrents. Many a delightful ramble I have had in this sweet country, in which the vineyard takes the most picturesque aspect, many hanging in festoons to cherry trees planted for the purpose; infinitely preferable, in a landscape, to the dwarfish vine, vainly climbing the dusty hill sides in many other parts of France. The far-famed vineyard, in fancy and description, is sadly over-drawn in its pretended beauties. It is like the lithographed Swiss cottages, all sunshine and rustic sweetness on paper, with neat-ankled, garland-decked damsels, milking or dancing in the foreground. In *reality*, the cottage is a dirty thatched hovel, built certainly with the rough and poetical-looking balcony; and the females are a coarse-limbed, sunburnt set of over-toiled slatterns as you can well conceive,—no more to compare to the lass at Bolton Bridge, than Marshal Bugeaud is to Napoleon, after which contrast ceases to be available. I made the return route to Bordeaux by the Pays des Landes and Mont de Marson, where they walk on stilts, talk about wolves, and perform other marvels, the tourists aforesaid have duly chronicled. After staying a short time in my favourite city, I crossed over to Paris, by Poictiers, Tours, Blois, Orleans, &c., and so on to England, by Boulogne and Calais, all of which road is known to every body.

I now purpose marching through Normandy and Britany, by far the most richly cultivated part of France, as I am informed; starting at Havre, in the first place, up the Seine on board the "Normandie," for which anticipated pleasure, I must now close my knapsack, and wish you—"good afternoon."

LETTER III.

THE SEINE. — VOYAGE TO ROUEN. — AMERICAN TOURISTS. CAUDEBEC. — TROUVILLE. — HONFLEUR. — WALK TO PONT LE VEQUE AND LISEUX. — FINE COUNTRY. — STRAIGHT ROADS. — REMINISCENCE OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT. — THE CHANNEL ISLANDS. — HEAVY SEA. — THE MAL-DE-MER.

Honfleur, June, 1845.

I HAVE been perfectly enchanted since I last wrote to you. The Seine is, without exception, the most beautiful of all the rivers I ever saw. The banks on each side are perpetually changing in variety of scene and interest, — woods, villages, ancient chateaus, highly ornamented churches, with islands covered with verdure, coming upon you at every turn of the winding stream; it is purity itself in cleanliness and transparency. The banks in places amount to cliffs in height and grandeur, with alternate glades and glens running far into the country.

I was in high luck in meeting with the very nicest party of American tourists it was ever my good fortune to become acquainted with. I shall long consider this voyage as one of the most agreeable in my reminiscences. Scenery like this, seen in such society, may well deserve the tourist's grateful recollection. We had a most excellent déjeûner-à-la-fourchette on

board the steamer, and enjoyed ourselves amazingly till we landed at Rouen, long before we thought or hoped we had got half the distance.

I can only say, with much truth, that when my western friends (en voyage) left me at Rouen for Paris, I felt as if I had swallowed a lead mine, or been compelled to read a chapter out of "Coningsby," so heavy-hearted was I when left behind in all my loneliness. They were polite enough to ask me to visit them at Meurice's, a happiness I was obliged to decline, wishing them every thing that is gratifying through Italy and Switzerland, and trusting they may find the Atlantic in the best possible humour on their return.

Every body knows Rouen, Joan of Arc, and all that often-told tale which the railway has made doubly stale; so I stayed but a few days at the Hotel de Rouen, and returned on foot by the banks of the river as far as the pretty little town of Caudebec, when I took the steamer, pulling up at Honfleur, where I intend making my head-quarters for a month, marching for four or five days together to different points of the country.

My first walk was to Trouville, by the sea; the view, after leaving Honfleur a mile or two, is magnificent, — the mouth of the Seine, about seven miles broad, the white cliffs, woods, and hills, make a most brilliant prospect. Many of the lanes mount the sides of deep glens, and are overhung with trees,

forming quite a bocage. You descend upon Trouville by a road almost precipitous.

Trouville is a bathing-place of very recent date, whither numbers of people flock from Paris and other parts during the season. It is excessively dear, and dull in the extreme; in windy weather walking out is next to impossible, the heaps of sand that fill every street being enough to blind you. All this, with its being a half-finished place, gives it a comfortless appearance, without its having a tithe of the inducements for sea-bathing that Havre itself possesses.

I crossed the river, and walked through a very fine country, making a detour to Pont Le Veque and Liseux. Rich pasturage, crops of grain, with orchards and woods, fill up the landscape; but you miss the hedge-rows, occasional patch of common, and village green of England, for there are none of these, nor cross-roads with white guide-posts, that give such variety to a high road: here all is straight and prose itself, though on each side it is no doubt the garden of France. From Honfleur to Courseule the land is good enough to feed any thing alive, and I only wonder the beef is not of a better quality coming from such a source.

The country round Honfleur is exceedingly romantic; the approach to the town by the Caen road is certainly the very finest I ever beheld. You have an avenue of lofty trees, quite two miles long, with

the fair Seine and white cliffs completing the view; it being a gradual descent, they are ever before you; it is an unrivalled entrance indeed.

The view from the Côte du Grace is magnificent — you have all the mouth of the Seine, the opposite banks, and distant glimpse of Havre. The environs of Honfleur are altogether very picturesque. The approach to it from the river reminds me very much of Ryde, in the Isle of Wight, that sweet little yachting, rural place.

Last year I walked all over the island, and was indeed enchanted; I have seen nothing in my various walks that is superior to the Undercliff. For land scenery on the one hand, with views of the ocean on the other, walk as I did from Shanklin to the Sandrock Hotel, and afterwards to Blackgang Chine, returning to the little inn to sleep in a room with a prospect on rising that would make you forget your breakfast. It is, indeed, a dear little hostel, covered with myrtle, vines, and roses, with a lawn like a green velvet spring sofa, so elastic and smooth is the turf, on which I sat with my pint of wine, after dining only as a pedestrian does, having walked for five hours with a lunch of "half-and-half" of sea and mountain air.

That excursion was indeed a pleasant one. I left Brighton, and passed through Worthing, Arundel, Goodwood, Chichester and Portsmouth, one continuation of beauties — a succession of woods, undulating

hill and dale, in the highest state of cultivation — and fine crops, with the glorious sea always fresh and near you.

After walking through the Isle of Wight, and staying some time at Southampton (without exception the prettiest town in England), "I took shipping," and passed over to Guernsey and Jersey, through which islands I also walked completely. I infinitely prefer the former, the coast scenes and bays are superb; the cliffs overhanging the Channel are grand in the extreme.

I saw the town of Coutances and all the coast of Britany very plainly from the tower in Jersey, by aid of my glass (from which I am diverging terribly, but most agreeably to my reminiscences). I promised no compass from the first,—my pen drifts in fancy's current,—I do not intend even to *try* to control it.

I was exceedingly delighted with the little rugged Isle of Sark. The beetling cliffs and craggy rocks, that form its defences from the sea, are unequalled in coast grandeur. No where does there roll and toss a more furious sea than in this part of the Channel. I crossed over to Jersey in the "Dasher," through a sea that curled and broke at times as high as our chimney — luckily we made a fair wind of it, and landed none the worse for a little salt water. I never saw a heavier breaking sea than that we met near the Casket rocks particularly — and I have heard nautical men admit the same. It was so severe on

the day I allude to, that the return steamer, having a dead "noser" in prospective, thought it best to remain in harbour, much to the discretion of her commander. The tide runs like a "mill race," and when met by a "sow-wester" is very apt to make it a matter of question whether going to sea for pleasure is really the luxury it is generally imagined by those on shore. The monotony, oppressive atmosphere below, quivering of the vessel under her machinery, with the incessant noise of some description or other, may be happiness to the "sons of the wave," but not to me.

If you escape the horror of sea-sickness, (a blessing I am most thankfully enabled to acknowledge so far) the dismal groans of your neighbour, in his hopeless attempts at striking a balance, are sufficient to provoke the most harmonious internals; but, when you have seventy persons in a cabin, with berths sufficing for half the number, all studying arithmetic together, rolling on the floor like heaps of old clothes, as I once witnessed one "dirty" night in the good "King Orry," as we walked the waters from Douglas, anything but like a thing of life, you would have seen the "mal-de-mer" to perfection.

A ship has been likened unto a "prison, wherein you had the chance of being drowned"—our improvements since that opinion was given, add the extra comfort at times of showing how the "sparks fly upwards." I know a gentleman who was blown

into the air with a lady at his side, from the "Graham" steamer in the Humber, and both picked up happily uninjured,—a good fortune few others experienced. I anticipate anything but your approval after being thus led to and fro : so to escape making it worse, I clip the end of my yarn, and say adieu.

LETTER IV.

A FRENCH FAMILY. — THE CHATEAU. — EXCLUSIVENESS. — COMMIS-VOYAGEURS. — SINGLE-STICK. — ALLUMETTES À FRICTION. — ANGLO-HATRED. — POLITICAL OPINION. — LOUIS PHILIPPE. — FUTURE WAR. — DEFENCES AT HOME. — FRENCH CAPTAIN. — THE MAJORITY IN FRANCE. — TAILORS AND POLITICIANS. — POLICE AND ESPIONAGE.

Honfleur, July, 1845.

AN introduction to a French family of the better class (any word to avoid that horrid one "genteel,") is most pleasant and advantageous. It is agreeable in the extreme if you are admitted to terms of intimacy, which they are very careful in allowing. The unaffected, elegant, yet simple manners, decorum and refinement in families of this class is delightful to witness, — no less so, the attention and genuine hospitality you receive at their hands. French families of this description appear to me to be thoroughly and innately amiable and affectionate among themselves, uniting a sincere yet playful fondness from their oldest to their youngest member.

I visited the château of a French gentleman lately, whom I had the good fortune to know, and can bear testimony to the truth of this. I met with a most hearty welcome from himself and lady, a very handsome, superior woman, who combined all the attractions

I have named, with that of a peculiarly soft voice in speaking,—without doubt the most enchanting accomplishment any woman can possess. A-propos to voices, I have been told by a gentleman (who has frequently the honour of judging), that it is impossible to conceive any thing more deliciously soft and pleasing than that of our own little genuine Queen, — he said the tones are something extraordinary in their sweetness; her crown cannot boast a more rare or precious jewel. To return to the château,—I was exceedingly pleased with its arrangements, uniting as they did all the French elegance in furniture, with the solid English comforts my host had picked up when staying amongst us.

After dinner we all walked in a large forest, pulling flowers, and conversing in the most easy, pleasing manner. I had all the best views pointed out to my notice, tea prepared out of compliment to myself, and took my leave, highly gratified with my day's excursion. Such people come little into public, and if a man sees only table-d'hôte society in France, he can form but a poor notion of the families living in their own châteaux. They are quite as exclusive in wishing to steer clear of the vulgar intercourse of the world, as any of our renowned "west-enders." Well they may be careful, for a more horrid, blustering, impertinent, forward set of cavaliers does not exist than the commis-voyageurs of France, who take the best seats at every table-d'hôte, with an

opinion they are equal to any prince, or clean, well-behaved man in Christendom.

The airs, language, and deportment of these commercial magnificos is something more than disgusting, — it is absolutely terrifying to quiet people. I heard a grey-bearded, moustached, dirty old dandy, with a crop of the true republican cut, his person hung in chains, and his dingy fingers encircled with rings, open the most violent tirade against England, Monsieur Guizot, and every thing *decent*, shaking his hand, after forming his fingers into a kind of cup the colour of a cocoa-nut, rolling his eyes, and ringing his *r*'s, till I got nervous. I timidly asked who he was, when he had completed his repast of near upon fifteen dishes (from the potage to the shrimps). A young French gentleman who sat next me said, "He is a blackguard, and sells allumettes à friction, or lucifer matches!" I thought he was at least some hero fresh from Africa, who had been roasting Arabs, decoré, and probably a marshal, from his overpowering eloquence! Lucifers at a sou a box must be profitable merchandise to maintain so splendid an ambassador. This is only a sample of the French bagmen; they are a numerous and dangerous set; they bully the innkeepers into submission to their order, make or unmake a café, keep up a constant outcry against every thing English, and are not very scrupulous whether they insult you or not. One of those fellows received a lesson from a

countryman of ours at Caen, who, after being grossly insulted, coolly knocked the bagman down, then said he had no ulterior intentions with "villanous saltpetre," or other deadly ingredient, with such a "snob," but that, if he was not good at his fists, he was welcome to a stick, when they did battle in the court of the inn, the Gaul getting such a drubbing that he had to pay for ten nights' lodging instead of one, not greatly to his master's interest, who most likely sold wax-dolls, or comfits, in gross and detail, finding few of the latter in his bragging representative. These fellows are all on the look-out for a row; they disseminate their Anglo-hatred from Bayonne to Ostend; they vend their spleen along with their lucifers and wax-dolls, and meet with ready listeners in all the small shop-keepers and country cafés. God help us! we must keep a bright look-out for these terrible "allumettes à friction," or we shall be assuredly baked into pies, or peradventure boiled into potage à la John Bull, as the poor Arabs were dished up by the French cooks. Without any approach to a joke, it does behove our people in power to protect our coasts a little more than they are at present, for in case of such a calamity as another war, the swarms of men, well accustomed to fire-arms, who are longing to visit England *free of expense*, besides an army of nearly half a million of men, greatly improved in size and equipments since I last saw them, make an enemy, who in talent

at the game, and deep and lasting antipathy (of this I am convinced), is any thing but to be despised.

When the present King of the French dies, there must be a change, and he unfortunately is too near his conclusion to make a calculation on his life any great security. We have received all that can be asked at his hands in the valuable mission we have seen filled in his peaceful reign, and must not be surprised if a storm should succeed the calm we have so long enjoyed. And whence has this calm proceeded? Not certainly from the excess of love for ourselves, that his unreflecting, Anglo-hating detractors impute to the sagacious monarch, but from the most perfect knowledge and foresight of the utter ruin that would overwhelm France, in case hostilities should occur before ample time were given him to strengthen the unprepared, nay, helpless state he found her in, as "incoming tenant,"—a work he has silently and studiously prosecuted, amidst the repeated shots at himself and family,—the insane war-cries of the terrific Thiers; and his admiring "allumettes à friction," as well as some little trouble in the nursery ever since Master Joinville insisted upon sailing his fleet in the wash-hand basin, to turning naval pamphleteer on the same scale. All this only served to brighten the old gentleman's spectacles, and to stimulate his politeness, in escorting our bonny little unsuspecting Queen, in a bathing machine, to the shores and before the eyes of only a very *partially* admiring

France. Though the affectionate pic-nicking sans ceremonial tableaux, as performed at Treport, with one or two more of a similar complexion, have been truly invaluable to the great political lessee of the nation, in furthering his views in regard to the all-indispensable boon of *time*, which but for that sad move on the *black square* (of Africa) might have been his own, and to spare.

There are three parties in France, all ripe and ready to cut each others' throats for the ascendancy; (the most dangerous in my opinion, will some day prove the strongest;) and it may be a forced matter of policy for the one in power to prefer to a civil war in France, even a war with England, or the world, by which means they amuse the mob, and put off the evil day to themselves. It is a high game to play, but a resort they can at any time fly to: it requires little notice or preparation to "spring the mine." One of their distant employés may be ordered to insult our flag, and if after all war is not quite convenient, he understands his lesson, receives a public reprimand and a private plaster. If, on the contrary, it should be needful for their purpose, or perhaps salvation, it is all that is requisite to "unkennel the dogs of war." For which, to suit their pressing case, are *we* prepared? if not of any present necessity, it is as well to be so, and perhaps the certain means of preserving peace, and consequently

making the money laid out in our defences a blessing to the whole world, *and then well laid out indeed.*

On my asking a French captain of a large ship, gone to Hayti, with whom I was on what may be called rather friendly terms, if there was not a very great dislike to England, through his own sources of information, he told me, with much candour, that "individually he never knew so good a comrade as an Englishman;" but that he hated our country and government most heartily, and that was the sentiment of most men of his class. "You have a large navy, I grant," said he, "but a great many bad ships," piquing himself, very justly, upon the old French ship Canopus being about the most respectable in the new crack squadron. "If war should ever be declared, nothing could be more popular with fully three-fourths of the people," added he; "Ireland would rise to a certainty, and in twelve hours we would land five hundred thousand men on your shores, and end the matter before you are prepared." There is a great deal of French bombast in this, (and so I told him,) and perhaps some truth. How could we prevent a large fleet of armed steamers running up the Thames, as we are protected at present? My "yarn" is anything but a serious matter, and most willingly would I steer clear of alarming needlessly either myself or my friends; but what I *see* I *will* believe; and I see, as plainly as I do the

glorious sun now shining, that sooner or later we shall have a quarrel with people who most devoutly detest us. The few well-informed merchants of both countries, the inter-married and intelligent part of the community, disclaim any such thoughts, and I believe sincerely; but what are they to the masses who *do?* not one in fifty, and the majority some day or other *will* be gratified in showing the power they possess in much greater force than our own ill-disposed have in their hand, for which a merciful Providence be praised. There is no superiority of squire and ploughman here. The dirty tailor's foreman curls his hair, combs the crumbs and bits of thread out of his vile beard once a week, and gives his opinion over a cup of black coffee and brandy, not caring a centime whether his next neighbour is a millionaire or a magistrate: he is quite as good in his own eyes as either, and of these men "their name is legion." They are all, more or less, politicians; and unsettled in their notions of the affairs of the world at large, which they imagine are entirely wrong, and require French interference.

Anything like superiority in rank or station is out of their creed, and an aristocrat of whatever clime is hated from their very heart.

It is fortunate that these uneasy spirits are easily pleased by much and incessant talking, the salle-de-dance, and dressing themselves once a week for a

promenade or fête. The government do well to sanction these things, with races, reviews, and constant sight-seeing: they serve, with African glory, to keep the people quiet a short time longer, with the very strictest police, and espionage that is at work night and day.

LETTER V.

RETURN TO HAVRE.—SAINT ADRESSE. — SPLENDID PROSPECT.—REMINISCENCE OF THE ISLE OF MAN. — BRADA HEAD.—FLESWICK BAY.—MANX BEAUTY.—SCARCITY IN FRANCE. — SCARBOROUGH. — THE EAST COAST. — HARFLEUR. — ENGLISH CHURCH. — NORTHUMBERLAND CAPTAIN.

Havre, July, 1845.

I TOOK the steamer again for Havre, to look about the port and its environs. I have just returned from "Saint Adresse," about a league's walk. The village is most romantically situated in a little wooded glen, with a primitive, quiet-looking church spire in the centre. The view from the heights, where the light-houses are placed, comprises one of the most perfect sea prospects I ever beheld. The numerous vessels of all rigs, in the roads and offing; the English steamer, threading her way amongst them, proceeding to England, with the coasts of Normandy and glittering Seine, make a splendid coup-d'œil, seen from a cliff four or five hundred feet above it.

I am writing this on the back of "Satan's toe," and wish I could sketch you the varied beauties as I have them on all sides. The day is perfectly cloudless, though cooled by the most delicious breeze from the sea far below me; I have counted more than a hundred

ships, brigs, and schooners, all close in shore, making for the port, where it is just high water. Havre is on my left, with the pier, shipping, and fortifications, laid out as in a picture. I am seated in a large tract of wheat and oats, all cut, and ready for leading. There is the glen on my right, with châteaux or country-houses on every side.

Rocks are only wanting to complete this glorious scene, or it would be perfect,—those grey, storm-beaten rocks in Guernsey, Sark, Filey, or in the little hospitable, warm-hearted Isle of Man. If you love a sea view and a sandwich as I do, with an air as light and pure as ether, walk to "Brada Head," or "Fleswick Bay," in the latter island: you will be well repaid for your trouble,—you will find the high banks fragrant with wild thyme and primroses, and a panoramic view on all sides of you. The emerald is not more clearly green than the sea that beats against the rugged coast. The screaming gull and mountain sheep will bear you company, when you refresh yourself from your wallet, as the sun sinks deep in the western seas, making the Irish Channel into one of gold. Let your next walk be to "Spanish Head," and then you will find rocks, chasms, and ocean, in all their grandeur, as well as many a right good dinner too, in the tight little island, if you are half as fortunate as I have been, many 's the time and oft!

You will also see more downright pretty girls in

the Isle of "*Man*" (as it is most gallantly named out of homage to *them*), than you can discover with the monster telescope in this vast continent. Of a verity, the café-noir, wine breakfasts, or *something*, does play havoc with the complexion in this country, for it is rare to find a clear one; and for a figure moulded to my taste, I have not seen three. The mould of the French ladies is not half filled by Dame Nature, and I am vulgar enough to fancy a great many are spoilt in the casting. For this, we are told, they abundantly make up in grace, in which I sincerely acquiesce,—but, like Shylock, I prefer the "pound of flesh" to any fabric made by human hands, however skilful they may be. I refer you to the fair Manx, for being turned out of the dear old lady's mould without a flaw,—with a natural grace, far beyond any praise of mine,—"the very air seems lighter from their eyes," though they have made me forget the sea view, on which I was attempting to dilate. There is no view compared to it, in my opinion: if you have the advantage of land scenery also, it is doubly grand. When you have the opportunity, stand on the heights within the walls of Scarborough Castle, turn north and south,—you have the fine sands, sea, view of Habonwyke and country round, on the former; with the ancient town, hanging bridge, sea, beach, and walks, on the other hand.

Scarborough and its neighbourhood are unrivalled in beauties; nowhere are there such cliffs, so high

and white, as those on the east coast, on which I have walked from the Humber nearly to Berwick-upon-Tweed, more than once, by Whitby, Lindisfarn, and coast of Northumberland.

I strolled the other day to Harfleur, keeping the high ground, and greatly enjoyed the excursion. The lanes are very rural and picturesque, with the pretty cottage residences of the Havre merchants placed in every romantic nook. You drop upon Harfleur when you hardly expect it. There is a very beautiful church here, built by the English, with a richly ornamented porch, in elaborate sculpture. The spire is also very fine. The interior was full of farthing candles as usual, with some daubs of paintings, that would indeed disgrace a barber's shop. There are absolutely vile coloured prints, with the tariff on various matters, stuck all over the fine grey stone, that would be far more eloquent without such decoration, (or desecration).

I fell in with a jolly Northumberland master, and owner of a brig laden with coals, who insisted upon my eating some "corned beef" on board his vessel, which I did with great relish. The worthy master had long traded with "Johnny Crapaud," (as he and all sailors call the French,) but knew no more of their language than the figure-head of his brig. He said he was greatly at a loss, at times, for a few hearty anathemas, when he wished to explain himself to the "lubbers" he had occasion to come in

contact with, and that the stock of coals in France is immense, with increasing orders for government stores.

These are about the only two walks in this immediate neighbourhood, (viz., Saint Adresse and Harfleur), though there are many to the north and north-east I have in prospective. I lay my staff and pen aside for the present, out of feeling for the trouble *you* take in accompanying them.

LETTER VI.

PORT OF HAVRE.—TRADE WITH AMERICA.—FINE LINERS. — FRENCH FASHIONS IN AMERICA. — FAIR YANKEES.— THE MONKEY TRADE. — THE RUE DE PARIS. — HIGH WATER. — ENGLISHMEN ABROAD. — ENGLISHMEN AT HOME. — FRENCH AND ENGLISH PRICES. — WINTER IN THE TWO COUNTRIES. — CORDIALITY. — CHEAP PARTS OF BRITAIN. — ADVICE TO STAY AT HOME. — BEAUTIES OF ENGLAND. — REMINISCENCE OF BOWNESS. — ROAD-SIDE INNS. — THE TALBOT AT MALTON. — CAEN.

Havre, August, 1845.

THE port is full of shipping — and does a considerable trade with America, Hamburg, and Russia,— comparatively little with England, beyond the tourists and their baggage. The former country has some splendid packet ships, that sail every month, some of a thousand tons, and magnificently fitted up for passengers. I saw most of them, and can bear testimony to their comforts, and arrangements in state rooms, cabin, and provisions. They all carry quite a farm-yard on board, having a cow, sheep, pigs, poultry, ducks, geese, and turkeys, with an ice-house, and excellent cook and library.

The "Zurich," "Havre," and "St. Nicholas," struck me as particularly well fitted up, being carpeted all over with rich Brussels carpets, having sofas, easy chairs, and a couch in every bed room, in addition to the beds, (for such accommodations are worthy a better name than "berths," being large enough for a good-sized cottage). The fare is six hundred and fifty francs. The Americans deal largely with France, and adopt quite the fashions of the latter country. The ladies in the United States look for these ships with longing eyes, for all the articles for "la belle toilette." Some that it was my good fortune to meet in my rambles, could not well be improved by any aid the marchands de modes in Paris could offer; on the contrary, the fair Yankees would infinitely grace all their bewitching inventions, and are much too pretty to care a grain of hair powder, if a packet ship should be detained over a ball or two, by the "rude, (ungallant), blustering railer."

Havre is always stirring: the monkey trade alone, with that in bulfinches and parroquets, and numberless other birds, keeps all alive. The Rue de Paris and Quai are filled with these noisy, useless, and (in reference to monsieur Jacko) disgusting creatures.

The shops are really very good, and stored with gay things. The numerous voyageurs en passant for England, Paris, and all parts of France, with diligences, voitures, and steamers arriving or depart-

ing, maintain a constant stream of strangers and bustle.

After Bordeaux, I think Havre may rank as the third town in France for life and gaiety; in point of real trade I greatly doubt if it is not the most important, after the capital, to which it is the port. There is no promenade but the pier or jetty, whither every one flocks in the evening. Here you have the incessant charm of the delightful sea, ever changing and ever refreshing.

High water brings the homeward-bound in, or takes the outward-destined bark out of port, and forms one ever-varying scene of interest. I cannot put up with an inland town after being so much in a sea-port, and sincerely hope I may have the choice allowed me of living in or near one "par préférence" whenever I drop my anchor.

I never saw an Englishman abroad who appeared thoroughly contented, much less comfortable. He seems invariably lost and out of his element, with the air of "nobody" about him. I do not mean this latter remark to apply to our magnificos, who make all the sensation that titles, retainers, and money always will; but on the promenade, in a small or large town, where the English live for their own purposes, they seem isolated and not on "friendly ground." If you see an English gentleman at the helm of his own cutter in the beautiful Southampton water for instance, or mounting his sleek roan cob at the

door of his cottage, or even lodgings (for another), or walking in his paddock caressing a favourite old brood mare, or strolling with his rod and line on the banks of some fair stream "as twilight's soft dews steal o'er the village green," (dear, *dear* old Rogers!) he *then* appears at *home*, and whatever his means, as one of the sons of merry England, and in his own element. See him at the cover side in native cleanliness, or opening the hand-gate of his snug retreat as he joins the bold yeoman, his next neighbour, on his grey, who gives him the hearty greeting of pleasure and esteem. They trot down the green lane together to the market town, discuss the price of wheat, the last run with the "Pytchely," and most probably dine together off good old English cheer. Our friend *then* seems one of the community, which I maintain he does not do in France. There is no feeling in common, either in town or the country, with an Englishman and the continent. The difference of daily habit and occupation is so great that there are few who can reconcile themselves to the change, or they must have more Gallic crosses in their blood than *I* and thousands of others possess. I do not write this in the spirit of complaint, or even comparison; I do it literally, in the hope of making my countrymen remember the glorious unheard-of beauties, comforts, and decencies of our own little island, — and to ask themselves the reason they have for leaving it, and above all, the amount of real

benefit they receive in the exchange. *Pride* will reply in many instances to the first question, but for the benefits I will go over the items, to show the possibility of living absolutely cheaper in England than in France, and heartily hope thereby to induce many "to let well alone," and stay where they are.

There is not a necessary article in daily use, in food, clothing, firing, house rent, and servants, that *may* not be had quite as cheap and at least fifty per cent. better in England than in France. This is a positive fact; and in point of climate I am sure we have not the excessive heat, wet, and cold, that prevail in Normandy, Britany, and all the northern parts of France.

When winter sets in, your heart freezes within you, as you mount your long, winding, dismal escalier, (the most abominable of all abominations). You look with a shudder at the lovely French casement with rose-coloured silk drapery, festooned with white muslin, so charming in sunshine and the magasin des modes.

You alternately blow your fingers and the few damp logs of the hollow beech tree. Visions of the closed shutters and crimson curtains of your own distant and once little-thought of abode, being illumined by a blaze of cannel coal as it passes over the face of your friend opposite to you, with his feet on the fender, and through the purple stream of 1820, in which the bee's-wing is only just beginning to dance!

There are humble, yet thoroughly decent modes of living on a small income, in many places in England, Wales, and Scotland, much more advantageously than in France, where millions of our gold have been left for ever! *never to return!* — to a people, who may serve their own hatters in the profuseness of their salaams,— but who like us not in their hearts.

There is no *cordiality* amongst themselves I am convinced: it is all either most servile, deferential, pompous ceremony amongst the common order, or else vulgar familiarity,—"hob a nobbing" with their glasses, and embracing, both with men and women. The latter propensity, I often think, might be "more honoured in the breach than in the observance," amongst the male community!

After a lapse of more than ten years from first visiting this country, and after mixing in what may be called rather a jolly way with a great many Frenchmen, I am convinced there is no cordiality in their feelings towards us, in one instance in ten thousand, except it is in their envy and dislike, which is cordial enough; and nothing but their politeness (for which I give them every credit and admiration) deters them from showing it more frequently.

But. to return to England (which I shall be most delighted to do!) Suppose a man blessed with a wife and two or three bairns, with a small, very small income: he wishes to sleep, eat, and drink, and be warm in winter on the best possible terms. He can

take a cottage in Westmoreland, Cumberland, Wales, the north of Yorkshire, (the most genuine, rural, fine, healthy district in the world, from Burlington to Stokesly and borders of Durham), in Devonshire, or in Scotland, if he loves a bracing cheering atmosphere, *natural to British lungs*, with all the outcry for Madeira, Ventnor, and Italy. In any of these countries he may live as to rent, beef, mutton, milk, bread, his own bacon, with a tidy serving wench or two, much better and cheaper than in the much vaunted provinces of Normandy and Britany. In such towns as Caen, Havre, Rouen, Pau, Honfleur, Avranches, and many other places, I am sure it is much dearer. Fish in all these places is infamously dear; the price of poultry is quite absurd. I have made all these inquiries, and paid for the information. Garden-stuff is equally high: clothing of all sorts extremely so, and, without the least stretch, it is fifty per cent. inferior to our own.

If a man with a fair income, wishes to avoid English habits and expenses in society, — to live for the sake of saving, as the French do, I readily grant you his object is feasible enough, with the great advantage of teaching his children French, one of the most essential points of modern education. For this purpose, many of our countrymen do expatriate themselves; but for those who wish to make both ends of only a sufficing income meet, I say emphatically, *Stay at home.* If not mounted as you would perhaps

wish, *walk* and be thankful; let a shooting jacket do duty for broad cloth occasionally, and never mind the sugar-baker's wife, or her Brougham.

Depend upon it, our really higher classes never look down upon a man for these things; and as for the "mushrooms," they are often very unwholesome, and frequently only poisonous fungi: so trouble not your head about fancied slights, which are very frequently only imaginary.

If you meet with little deference at home, under straitened circumstances, you will find less *respect* in France, for your motives on entering are well known, and *commented upon accordingly: of this be assured.*

Stick to your country as you would to your ship, only leaving them when you are compelled.

I am one of those men who love the features of a country as I would those of my mistress, and love them in constancy and from my heart, without wishing for change; particularly when I'll defy you to change for the better. If you love the face of a bonny lass or fair country, you must walk, as I have done, through England to find them in perfection. They both vary in their beauties: — the soft delicious plains of Sussex or Somersetshire, waving with the golden harvest and luxurious foliage, you may fancy a sleeping blonde. The dark face of Wastwater or Bolton Bridge, with the hanging woods of brown and purple, glimpses of heather, and glittering waterfall, make the country's features beautifully brunette.

There is not an inch, from the Land's End to the bleak cliffs and solemn rocks that brave the extreme northern blast, but teems with variety and beauty.

The lanes, the ruins, the hedge-rows, lakes, streams, and village churches, the richly-farmed garden, (for it *is* one) the fragrant heather, the forest lands, the country towns, and unequalled roads, winding past ancient domains and manor-houses, are replete with interest. The rugged scenes of Derbyshire and Scotland, the sweet pastures and glorious hunting countries of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, make up our little island panorama, — one I never saw excelled, and a banquet of "the sweet old lady's" providing, at which I have often had a hearty welcome.

Breakfast with me at Bowness, and we will then walk to Keswick, by Ambleside, and Strand, over Sty-Head, coming on to Derwentwater by Lodore.

The window is open, the lake is just curled by the early September breeze, that sweeps so deliciously over it till it reaches our little sitting-room, and waves the roses that peep in upon us. The tea-kettle, as bright as burnished gold, is hissing like one of his huge descendants. The fresh eggs, broiled ham, (cured by Mrs. Ullock,) the potted char, the cold game, with muffins, hot and well buttered, most seductively solicit your attention. The old-fashioned silver ewer is full of clotted cream, the damask is as white as the teeth of the

smiling lass who makes your tea, — and now tell me, if this is not equal to any table-d'hôte breakfast you ever saw, granting that you regaled yourself with radishes and oysters, half a mackarel swimming in oil, and finished off with peas and sugar, or an omelette aux fines herbes, with a bearded, spitting, chattering neighbour on each side of you? Comparisons are said to be odious, and I very much opine this is one of them.

The roadside inns in England, till the fashion made every thing iron — dukes, ships, roads, and hearts—were the very acmé of comfort. The perfect cleanliness, the plenteous, exquisite fare, the jolly host and comely hostess, made your fatigue forgotten, on arriving at such quarters. The four-post bed, with stiffened white dimity hangings, the large wash-hand-basin, and lots of towels: the "Going to Cover," and "Full Cry" over the chimney-piece, with perhaps a "brush" for a handle to the bell-rope, told you that hounds were in the neighbourhood, and that hunters were sent over-night to the comfortable loose boxes in the yard opposite.

These inns were large, and had ample accommodation to post my lord, or "supper him up for the night." There was a ball-room, excellent market-table, assize, race, and hunting dinners, all of which, alas! have merged more or less, into the "up" and "down" train, and a basin of soup at Wolverton. The house at Hockanbury-hill, on the London road

from Lincoln, with its beautiful garden, and shrubbery in front, — the "George" at Grantham, where four mails dined, besides "Telegraphs," "Highflyers," and "Tally-ho's" innumerable, with perhaps the most splendid sleeping apartments in any hotel in the world — where are they? — empty and desolate — no more the cry of "horses out" is heard ringing through the fine stable-yard, putting to flight troops of clean tight-breeched "boys," for "first turn."

The "Fire King" and Mr. Hudson do all the posting now-a-days, and you must leave the road-side, its inns, its comforts, and associations, neglected and forgotten.

But I have not yet done with the inns of other days, a few of which, thank Heaven, remain in all their ancient management and attraction, and long may they flourish! Perhaps, one of the best specimens of these old English comforts is the "Talbot," at Malton, a regular posting, farming, country gentleman's inn. The garden is, without exception, the most beautifully kept I ever saw — a bowling-green is rugged in comparison to the lawn before the windows. The kitchen-garden boasts the earliest peas, potatoes, and asparagus. The neatly clipped hedges will do your heart good to look at, after leaving the "Nine Elms" station. The ale as bright as amber, the pork pies, the old waiter, and old port, have a charm about them, that even the "Hôtel de la Saleté" at this place cannot compensate for.

From Mivart's to "the Eel Pie-house,"— whether you dine off turtle or a rasher, every thing is of the best of its kind in England. You have a clean hearth, a bit of bright fire, and march on in security, knowing the same fare awaits you wherever you may choose to halt; which, with your permission, I will now do for our mutual refreshment.

LETTER VII.

VOYAGE TO CAEN. — SOCIABLE INVALIDS. — INCESSANT TALKERS. — FRENCH DRUMS. — THE REVEILLÈ. — MY LODGINGS. — REVIEW OF NATIONAL GUARDS. — LUDICROUS SCENE. — LUC. — FRENCH BATHERS. — REAL MERMAIDS. — MARINE FLIRTATIONS. — THE ROUTE TO LUC. — THE HEIGHT OF SUMMER. — GRATITUDE AND CONTENTMENT.

Caen, August, 1845.

I HAVE taken up my quarters at Caen for some time, from which city I propose to stroll for a few days, or perhaps a week together. I arrived here by sea, in the "Calvados," the name of the vessel, and department in which she is employed. We had a tumbling cross sea till we made the mouth of the river. Nearly all the passengers were most ludicrously ill: they were all French but myself, and as they make a scene of every thing of this nature, the "mal-de-mer" is too great an event to escape all the ceremony attending a "contre-temps." The exclamations, gestures, and lamentations, kept them fully employed. I saw a party of three, who made quite a social thing of it, — they had one common receptacle for their woes, and kept up a spirited conversation between the qualms. Nothing *can* stop these people talking, not even sleep, for I heard my nearest

neighbour, at the L'Amirauté, in a most excited argument with some imaginary antagonist all the night: when awoke, he sang in the deep, guttural, fashionable cadence they so much esteem, (a note between Frederick Lablache and a bull calf). The déjeûner found a friend ready for a windy fray, respecting artichokes, la chasse, or Marshal Bugeaud, and so he would continue all day with some one, (or to himself,) till his dreams again furnished a topic. I first proceeded to the Hôtel de France, whose gateway and escutcheon denote the former importance of its occupant, but I found myself far too near the Hôtel de Ville to be able to remain, sleeping after four o'clock in the morning being quite out of the question. The drums begin at that hour, and I verily believe never end, without the relief of the "little fifer," or even a brisk "rub a dub." You hear a monotonous, deadened, heavy drumming all day long at intervals, for some purpose or other. In the evening, at eight o'clock, these sheep-skin thumpers parade the town in a troop of forty or fifty, drumming up all the soldiers to bed.

The reveillè by the bugles of our infantry, or the call to stables by the cavalry trumpet, are delightful sounds, particularly when like village bells they are heard at a distance, but the dismal harrowing drumming of the French is actually odious. The O'Jibbeways beat it in harmony. I soon quitted the proximity to this nuisance, and took up my quar-

ters with a "garde nationale," in the Rue de l'Oratoire. I found them exceedingly comfortable, clean, and well furnished, with every politeness and attention on the part of the family. Roses, carnations, and mignionette are growing luxuriantly in my two large French windows; my bed is hung with white embroidered muslin curtains; I have a pink silk coverlet, that puffs up like an omelette soufflet, and all for a mere trifle, which is consoling in the extreme.

I have just witnessed a review of the National Guards of Caen, about five thousand men, — they were very soldier-like looking men *for* National Guards. The troops of the line are not set up as our men are, *they* slouch a little, and Messieurs of the garde nationale a good deal. It was merely a review by the Marquis D'Escallien, a very handsome, soldier-like fellow, there being no manœuvres beyond firing a few field pieces, and considerable kissing amongst the men, (really and truly I *saw* it): several stepped out of line, and kissed the sergeant or corporal, or whatever he was, most fervently! I was exceedingly tickled at one fellow in the grenadiers: his white trousers were made upon some new principle, with puckers in front, and a strap to secure them behind. Whether the tongue of the buckle broke or came out, I know not, but the breeches were very nearly falling about the grenadier's heels when under review, and no sooner had he arranged his difficulties, than his "covering

files," (as the villains behind him *ought* to have been), pulled them loose again. The good-humour of the fellow was heavenly; he bore all in great tribulation, with his musket, cross belt, sword, huge bear's skin cap and falling drapery, filling his hands to overflowing. The roars of laughter brought the captain of the company, a droll queer-looking fellow in spectacles, (very probably next door neighbour to the "rank and file"): however, he thought fit to deliver himself of a solemn mock speech on the decorum of dress, "threatening to suspend both man and breeches," till he succeeded in making every one split their sides with merriment, in which I joined with more heartiness than I had felt for many a long day.

There are nearly fifty thousand inhabitants in Caen, yet it is without exception the most stupid, dull, monotonous place I ever stayed in; there is literally nothing to do, or see, from one day to another, with a dreary sameness perfectly depressing.

I gladly, therefore, shouldered my knapsack, and walked to Luc, on the sea coast. It is a small bathing place, where a good many people were staying, strolling on the sands, and splashing in the water, from daylight till dusk. I never saw such bathers as the French, particularly the women, who swim as well as Leander, or a dolphin. I saw one fair head and shoulders close on my starboard hand, proceeding most gracefully and quietly, in deep water, long

after I was tired, and I believe I had gone half-a-mile at least. This was no single instance: I saw many girls swim most mermaidenly — they were perfect "ducks" indeed. They wear very becoming bathing dresses, and oil-skin caps, occasionally trimmed with red and blue worsted, looking most bewitching as they lay floating on their backs, in evident comfort to themselves, gazing at the heavens, reminding me of coral rocks, on which a man might shiver his heart, before he knew he was near the sunken danger. At Longrune, near Luc, I saw one tall, dark-eyed young lady (perfectly comme il faut) jump off a high boat into deep water, with a considerable sea on, and dive like a Malay. Human nature, (particularly in a French August) could not withstand this; so I instantly jumped in also, clothes, knapsack, (I am almost sure) and all, and had a long chat with my next neighbour, as we swam together.

Bathing here is carried on in quite a sociable manner: you may see parties of a dozen in the water, making a complete briny fête of it. Throwing cold water upon love, in our country, is supposed to have quite a chilling effect on the flame, if not to act as its entire extinguisher; here, it is quite au contraire: a gentlemen dives with a lady, and "proposes," under water (that they should *come up again,* I fancy, if his submarine eloquence extends so far). The flirtations I saw en caleçons were numerous, and I have no doubt pathetic; if the *sobbing* I heard at times, was any

criterion of the patient's case, I should think it was next to hopeless. The depth of the affaires du cœur that came before my notice, varied from three to thirty feet, and though all flattered themselves they took things coolly, I saw many of both sufferers, who were decidedly "over head and ears."

The fair creatures remained sadly too long in the water to my thinking, yet I sincerely hope they experienced no ill effects from the immersion.

The route to Luc, by Leon, is through a most highly cultivated farming district, a rich, waving, undulating plain, teeming with a plenteous harvest; (which I devoutly hope my own dearly-loved England may be equally blessed with). There appears to be no division in the farms, all stretching for leagues in an unbroken succession of produce,—large reaches of wheat, barley, oats, rye, tares, red clover, mangel wurzel, cinquefoin, and lucerne, in the greatest luxuriance: apple and plum trees loaded, are on all sides apparently untouched. It is a point of honour in these matters, highly chivalrous, in the French school lads: you never hear of a paltry theft; and I feel as secure in my apartments, when absent, all through France, as if my property was under my own eye.

In walking back to Caen, there are numerous villages, with their beautiful church spires: these, and the distant hills, complete the scene, in which I rambled with great pleasure. The world, just now, is like a full-blown matron—the partner of your joys;

every thing is gushing with ripeness, with sufficient beauty left, to give you no cause to *even recollect;* (much less *regret*), the spring that has passed away. This is as it should be; and when winter comes, let us close round the fire, have cheerful looks, and mutually comfort each other. Then the summer will follow the spring, and leave us unrepining, though deeply sensible of the many exquisite delights we have enjoyed, and grateful for the harvest we have gathered to our barns.

LETTER VIII.

RACE-HORSES. — THE TRAINER. — FREEMASONRY. — THE HARAS. — THE OLD HURDLE RACER. — EVERYTHING "GENTIL."— COURSES DES CHEVAUX. — THE DELIGHT OF THE PEOPLE. — THE HURDLE RACE. — THE GENTLEMAN JOCK. — THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT. — HEAVY RAIN. — ADIEU TO FRENCH RACING.

Caen, August, 1845.

In taking my stroll this evening as usual, I was perfectly enchanted at the sight of some dozen "high-mettled racers," walking in the Place de la Prefecture, in all the due regulation of plaided clothing, and the most approved horse dandyism, — with a little pale-faced Newmarket-looking fellow in the centre, giving his orders alternately in pure Suffolk, to a squinting hard-featured man on the leading horse, and in a beautiful Gallic accent, to the native boys who followed him.

My heart gave a jump at the unexpected sight, as I exclaimed with Barlow: —

> "Dear Hasty Pudding! what unpromis'd joy,
> Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy!
> My soul is sooth'd, my cares have found an end —
> I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend."

I was soon by the side of "Monsieur le Conducteur Anglais des chevaux du haras du gouvernement,"

as he was styled and titled by his French employers. One word about the "Ditch in," the Rowley mile, and "Old Sam," did more towards an introduction, than all the "gibberish," (as he termed French), could have managed in a twelve-month. His eye lighted up at the well-known dearly-loved masonic names, as he anxiously begged me to tell him the winner of the "Stakes at Goodwood," as he had not seen "Bell" for a month.

We went to stables together, and saw a bit of French strapping, which with all his tuition he could not get to his liking.

"They are a set of muffs altogether," said he, "and I am fit to give in at times — otherwise the gentlemen are very fond of the game, (what little they know of it,) and I am thankful to say I have got as good a place as I could wish (to be transported as it were) in the Haras du Pin, near Argentan; and if you will walk and look at our stud, I think, you will be pleased with the establishment. We have stock of all description, and a country very much like England: I can only say I shall be most happy to show it you."

My new friend's Newmarket manners were quite diluted by his intercourse with the polite nation. It was delicious to hear the old pure "Six mile bottom" dialect, accompanied by a bow Lord Chesterfield might have been proud of. With the exception of one old nag of the square Cotherstonian cut (English

of course), who notwithstanding he had been *repaired* rather frequently at home, had "mill'd all the lot in France, over hurdles," as my informant told me; the rest were a narrow, weedy, "Coldrenick" looking crew, fit for their calling, and shipped with infinite judgment; for the longer and thinner a horse's leg is, and the slimmer his carcass, the more "genteel" is he, a term of approval they give to every thing here, from the "setting sun" to a monkey!—as I have heard both called when an opinion was asked in reference to them. I should think it scarcely possible to conceive a more distant remove, but every thing is "gentil."

My hasty pudding, over which I intended to feast all my senses, was not much to my taste after all, for one day sufficed for the Courses des Chevaux at Caen, and I gladly walked into the country on the second, "chewing the cud" of the sweet downs and heaths I had seen in my time.

The race course at Caen is (with the exception of its being a very severe deep flat, and heavy in the extreme after wet) hardly susceptible of improvement. The site for spectators, of which there were fully twenty thousand, is particularly good, and well adapted in every way. The ground was kept by quite a battalion of infantry; there was a musket and bayonet at every twelve paces.

The people were dressed in their best, highly, (*excruciatingly*) delighted—every thing pleased them;

they smoked and chattered incessantly, and made their remarks on the sports, in sad discord to my ears. The Turks and Germans are silenced by tobacco; but these people can, and will talk, with their heads under water, as I have already shown.

There were chariot races,—absolutely races by horses harnessed in four-wheeled vehicles. Then the "weeds" were saddled, and ran for some thousand francs; then struck up the band; till at last my old friend with the blemished hocks came out to jump the hurdles. It did my heart good to see the "old christian," who seemed in very tolerable "twig" for the job. There were four or five other starters, with gentlemen riders. The old horse was bestrode by a fierce dandified Gaul, bearded to the eyes, and bedecked most bewitchingly; he had much more hair about his face than his animal had in rather a good bang tail. The old steeple chaser (peradventure, once mounted by our Jemmy, in his white does and bandbox garb), must have been rather astonished at his jock, in appearance and pilotage, for he went off at score, (though a deep three-mile race), letting go his horse's head from the first, having quite plenty to do to mind his own. It was not in the game old animal's nature to lose; on the ground he was, he *could* not, he *would* not be beat! but he did all the work himself; steering his rider home safely, and the franc pieces into the pocket of his delighted owner. One extremely gay gentleman showed us his knowledge of

the fifth commandment, without leaving a doubt of his sincerity, for he kissed his mother before us all, to prove how highly he honoured her—dislocating a shoulder, and breaking a nose, to entitle him to the reward. I would recommend him to decline hurdle racing for the future in his affection for his mamma, or I prognosticate that his days will *not* be very long in the land of his horsemanship.

A rattling shower sent all the fine, Normandy bonnets, with royals and studding sails set a-low and aloft, as well as the nankeen pantaloons, scudding like gulls before a gale. I quietly popped into the stables for shelter, as well as to run my hand over the old horse; — and I earnestly hope, to say farewell to French racing; in which I must include you, I regret to say, for the present.

LETTER IX.

MONSIEUR GUIZOT. — HIS NUMEROUS ENEMIES. — HIS AMIABLE CHARACTER. — STREET CRIES AT CAEN. — HORRIBLE NOISES. — FRENCH PASSION. — ROUGH USAGE OF THEIR HORSES. — ENGLISH LABOURERS. — ENDURANCE AND PLUCK. — A STORM. — KIND TREATMENT. — THE CURÉ.

Caen, August, 1845.

I HAD the honour of meeting Monsieur Guizot the other day in walking through Lisieux, and felt extremely gratified in having a sight of so great and amiable a man.

The Minister was taking a little relaxation, in which he seldom indulges, in visiting his place and the neighbourhood,—the manufactories of Lisieux amongst the rest, where he was shown all the respect to which he is so justly entitled. — Otherwise, amongst "Messieurs of the beard" and the café distingués, he is hated with a deadly hatred. They make no disguise of their sentiments, in the epithets I have heard applied to him: — the greatest blot in his character being his fancied friendship for England. Expressing their difference of opinion with the minister on this particular point, to an Englishman, is rather contrary to "bonos mores," one would imagine, in the anti-Guizots, but it only proves that even politeness (nearly their second

nature) cannot prevent them from giving vent to their overburthened feelings, when they smart under this incurable, self-probed sore. Monsieur Guizot is too reflective, calm, and far-seeing, in his policy, to suit these petulant gentry: he has also a turn for respectability and repose, or rather tranquillity, not the most pleasing to their feelings and future hopes.

I have heard that the habits of this truly accomplished and excellent man are most simple yet refined, rather opposed to the boundless extravagance and expense displayed by the little "bitter almond" Thiers. It is a pity such an invaluable life cannot be *really* insured, for the good of the country. Every good man in Europe would cheerfully subscribe to keep up the policy.

Of a surety, the French are the most noisy people in the whole world. The cries from five o'clock in the morning till ten, in this town of Caen, beat London hollow. I have counted upwards of thirty different "marchands des legumes," as they call cabbage sellers here, (a "cat's meat man" or an "old clothes' man" (*marchand des habits*), is "a *merchant*") bawling in the most discordant, harsh, sleep-destroying voices where I live. They are generally women, of the most masculine forms. The voices of one or two are perfectly terrific: I never thought such sounds could have been produced by any female lungs. They sell artichokes (without which a Frenchman cannot make a meal)

firewood, prunes or plums, vegetables of all sorts, and fish. They mend windows, umbrellas, and saucepans at your door,—shoes also occasionally. To many of these luxuries, your attention is drawn by horns and drums, as well as the vile cries that accompany them. There are banjos, organs, "and all other kinds of music," with that detestable crack of the whip from every postillion, carter, and the urchins in the streets. I have been wroth to the very gall, when meeting a fellow with a return pair of wretched posters, covered with ropes and bells, cracking his villainous thong with a conceited air over his head, like a pistol, through every street, till he arrived at his stables, not thinking (or caring) for the numerous invalids (some perhaps dying) whose rest he was disturbing by such uncalled-for horrors.

If the striding, solemn heroes, the gendarmes, were set to rectify a few such nuisances as these, and many more, that could be named, they might render their brilliant persons a little more useful as well as ornamental in the streets. The way the men speak to their horses is equally rough, and peculiarly savage in its tones. We should have compunction in addressing a bull, in our country, as these men constantly speak to the fine intelligent animals under their charge. I have seen them used in a most cruel way whenever their drivers get in a passion, which is the case in France on any trifling occasion. Then the gestures, grimaces, action, and

eloquence of the performers, is exquisite to witness, —screaming, swearing, yelling, and appealing to the spectators, with features absolutely *eaten by rage.*

They seldom fight, though they will run their open hands within a hair's breadth of each other's faces, literally touch noses, and you expect nothing less than annihilation and mutual cannibalism, from the vengeance they screech in each other's ears. When they *do* fight, it is a revolting exhibition: fair play is out of their tactics; they roll on the ground, bite, tear each other's hair, and take every unnatural advantage.

I met a party of English labourers, the other day, proceeding to the Rouen railway— huge, gigantic, silent working fellows, with limbs like wood and iron —who, a French gentleman told me with much truth, could get through more work in one week, than an equal number of his own countrymen could in two. He admitted there was no comparison.

In talking to these Englishmen, I asked if they did not get into frequent rows with the French labourers on the line, and how they managed to settle differences when forced to arms. One fine fellow was about six feet and a half high, dressed in a shirt as white as snow, (they are always particularly clean in this respect,) a pair of rough cord breeches, laced boots, weighing half a stone — with his spade and pickaxe, pioneer fashion, on his shoulders. This fellow had a monstrous fine massive face, though

stern, if not savage in its expression. He said, "Why as for himself, he liked a fair stand up-fight, and no favour, and could not *bide* the up-and-down "bull-dog fashion of Mounseer;" but, added he, "we have generally a gang of Lancashire fellows near at hand, always *polite* enough to accommodate them at their own game, and we generally spoil their beauty!"

There are a great many of these English labourers now in France, working on the different railways: they all complain of the dearness of provisions, as well as of the difference in the nourishment contained in them, compared with those in England.

Our men make solids and home-brewed a "sine quâ non" in their daily food; and we may venture to believe, in aiding the national "lasting" and "bottom," they have proved superior to soup and vin ordinaire. A Frenchman as strong as Hercules in outward appearance, cannot *continue* at work with one of our fellows, either afloat or ashore. In point of endurance no pluck (great as it is,) can compete with it in obtaining any object in which both are required. Long may such men be found with contented hearts in our own country, to stimulate the physical strength no other can produce.

I was overtaken by a tremendous storm of wind, and a deluge of rain, last evening,—luckily, as I entered a small village on the coast. I resolved to camp with a reputable animal of any sort, either horse, cow, or fatted calf, if I could get no better

quarters, in preference to marching farther in such weather, with the lowering night dogging my heels like a footpad. But I had no necessity for messing with quadrupeds, being most kindly entertained by a good-hearted Norman lady, adorned in a cap so high that it nearly touched the ceiling. I had a cake of chocolate in my knapsack, with which, a couple of eggs, and some bread and butter, I made a capital repast; and slept "like a top," in a little, clean, white bed, that was enclosed during the day, "behind the arras."

A curé, of mild, intelligent countenance, spent part of the evening with us, and was very desirous to know all particulars of our parsons at home, what they had to do, and how much they were paid; I told him, they generally lived upon "*bread and fish*," drank port in winter, were very tolerable shots and bowlers, and varied in their receipts from 50*l.* to 3000*l.* a year; though all were pretty nearly at an equal expense in the needful education to fit them for the holy calling.

The good curé thought I was joking (though he was far too polite to say as much), and it is, perhaps, quite as well if he continue to do so.

I could not help contrasting the vicar of "Fudley-cum-Pipes," in the first flight with the Holderness, riding a raw, hard-pulling horse, and the meek bombazine-arrayed curé, who never even saw one in his dreams, for any purpose of his own. Good man, he

would walk fifteen miles to save a soul (or a sou), and only think it his duty. My kind hostess provided an excellent bowl of milk for my breakfast, in preference to all the good things she offered, on which, with some bread, I made an excellent meal; shouldered my knapsack, and returned my most grateful thanks (all the pay the kind lady would receive), for my hospitable entertainment;° wishing you also "good bye" for a day or two.

LETTER X.

LACE-MAKING. — DISGUSTING HABIT. — HORRORS OF TOBACCO.—DANGER IN LUCIFERS.—A SUN-SET.—VIEW OF CAEN. — LOVE OF FLOWERS. — SOMBRE APPEARANCE OF THE STREETS. — DULNESS OF THE PLACE. — LIFE IN A SEAPORT.

Caen, August, 1845.

NEARLY all the females at Caen, and for quite fifteen miles round, are employed from childhood to the very grave in making lace.

Under hovels and trees, in the open streets and door-ways of their houses, are they from morning till night employed in making the finery, to be worn in very different scenes, by the beau monde, who little know (or care) whence it comes.

The lace is made, by passing innumerable bobbins of thread over pins, that mark the pattern on pasteboard (some extremely complicated); it seems to an observer to be one incessant winding, pricking, unwinding, and unpricking, from sunrise till bed-time; for they strain at the mazes of the dentelle by the light of a miserable candle: and as they can only make a very few inches a-day with their utmost endeavours, "the labourer is, indeed, worthy of her hire," by the shop-keeper at Caen, who, I take it, supplies the thread and pattern, and gets all the profit. Poor creatures! they appear to employ every

moment of their lives in this bewildering, sight-destroying occupation (as it appeared to me); whirling their fingers, and rattling their tongues, their only solace. Exercise they never think of; a hasty meal is all they leave their seats for, when they return to their never-ending toil.

The lace is black and white, with "blonde." It varies considerably in price, some being very expensive, if you purchase it in the shops. Where all the immense quantity goes to, is surprising. The ladies only can tell, but far be it from me to hint at so impertinent a question.

How *can* a Frenchman *think* of spitting on the floor of the "saloon," or "Salle-à-manger," during dinner, or before ladies? why does not some influential writer *tell* them in a *weekly* pamphlet, that it is disgusting, absolutely more disgusting than anything it is possible to imagine! I know no language that can adequately express the unqualified horror I entertain of this peculiarly French habit. The filthy, useless, annoying one of smoking, is carried to the greatest excess; and, if you travel by a crowded steam boat, the air is polluted by the foul odour from the vilest cigars, made at home, from something that emits anything but a "sweet savour" indeed.

Your clothes are in the greatest risk from the incessant cracking of "allumettes à friction," on all sides of you — which, it is a matter of surprise, is so heedlessly permitted amongst bales of cotton, and

other combustible goods. This dangerous habit has, I hope, been nearly checked in our own country, near warehouses and dry goods; for I am convinced, many an unaccounted-for fire has its origin in a stray lucifer. On board the steamer, or on the promenade, you cannot escape the filthy weed, in all shapes,—pipes, cigars, cigarettes, and in lumps behind the tongue. Then the deck! let me not name the sickening abomination. I have looked my detestation, when a man has "opened out" near me, but the return look was generally surprise, and real ignorance of its being contrary to civilisation. The pride of a Frenchman (if he is your bootmaker) will carry him through any of his peculiar habits, before any one alive, for which he richly deserves *spitting* himself — I only wish a little *roasting* would get him off it.

Bowing and scraping, with the hat held in the hand for several minutes (or half-an-hour if necessary) in deferential humility before a lady, (the extreme fashion here with the vulgar,) is but a poor set-off in politeness to the atrocity of spitting within an inch of her patent leathers, — but so long as she does not express her disgust, but most probably spits again! what can you expect?

It is a disgrace to la belle France, and if practised on me, in my *own* room, I should find both my friendship and politeness taxed to the utmost, to put up with it twice. I must take a stroll after

this sickening subject for a little fresh air,—so adieu for a while.

I have just seen a most glorious sunset, from the hill above Caen, on the road to Luc. All the fair plains of Normandy were flooded by the departing rays. The corn seemed fields of waving gold. The large city lay below me, with fourteen church and cathedral towers and spires, to be seen nearly parallel, with fine trees in great numbers filling up the spaces. The river winding through the rich meadows, with scarcely a wreath of smoke to be seen. It was a lovely scene, and it was dusk, before my admiration tired.

The people of Caen have quite a passion for flowers. In every window, however humble the abode, you see the most beautiful geraniums, carnations, jasmine, lavender, roses, and mignonette, growing in profusion.

Looking down the long old-fashioned streets, these flowers have a most pleasing effect, and harmonise with the ancient quaint buildings, many elaborately ornamented in relief, with carved fronts and pointed gables.

Many of the streets have a sombre, still air about them, though they are certainly as clean as possible. The larger dwellings have court-yards filled with firewood, and gardens completely enclosed, with an air of melancholy respectability, for there is no approach to cheerfulness in their features.

Many of the families living in Caen, I am told, are wealthy. I certainly saw some very good horses, equipages, and other signs of such being the case. How they amuse themselves, I could never comprehend: you see nobody out except the very few strangers, and when the band plays twice a-week late in the evening. All the rest of the day I noticed heads looking out of the many high windows for a considerable time together, and generally in conversation with the next "Peeping Tom," or "Tomline."

Altogether this town (vast as it is) had a dull, monotonous, depressing air about it, I could not get over. I am never dull alone: give me a book, and place me on a cliff, and I only regret when the time comes for leaving it, — but to be the inmate of a large city without experiencing its life and pulsation, is past endurance. At Havre, you see the industry, the enterprize, the struggles of the world, with its crowds in the hour of relaxation and gaiety. You hear the lively pauls of the windlass, the rattling of blocks, and cheering song of the crew, on board the fine craft that fill the port, and bring up in the roadstead.—You see her as she "lets fall" her topsails, and points her head to the farthest hemisphere. Again, you have her bringing the news and produce of distant seas. All is healthy bustle and excitement.—It was for such things we

were made, and not for rusting in idleness, or too much reverie.

At all events, our intellect and energy suffer from the daily routine of such places as Caen, as I found it: nothing but my determined marches and countermarches into the country made it at all bearable. I am now compelled to retire to my dormitory, in which I have a beautiful white rose, in full bloom—it is my only companion, as "I spin the yarn," I fear you will only find too tough and tedious.

LETTER XI.

BON SAUVEUR. — MIGNONETTE. — SISTERS OF CHARITY. — THE KITCHEN. — TERMS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT. — BEAU BRUMMEL. — HIS MANNERS AND APPEARANCE DESCRIBED. — PROTESTANT CEMETERY. — DRESS. — THE "MORAL" IN IT. — A CONTRAST. — TIDY WOMEN. — HANDS AND TEETH.

Caen, August, 1845.

I HAVE just returned from "Bon Sauveur," or Maison de Santé at Caen, a large and very interesting establishment for the reception and cure (if possible) of persons suffering the mind's worst malady.

You may judge of its size, when I tell you there are about seven hundred inmates, sixteen gardeners, and upwards of sixty other domestics. The gardens are very fine and large, and filled with the most beautiful flowers. Rows of fine balsams, carnations, lavender, and roses, with mignonette, absolutely in "*meadow.*"

The kitchen gardens are extremely well tended, and full of good things; I particularly noticed the endive, celery, and gigantic rows of kidney beans. I was shown completely over the place by a "Sister of Charity," whose mild address, and intelligent remarks, made her a very interesting conductress.

The black and white attire, with the forehead

bandaged in white linen, gives these ministering human angels a solemn nun-like look as they pass you, with noiseless footsteps, on their errand of charity; but they are all cheerful, as well they may be, from the consciousness of always doing good.

They are at every bedside, when they can be of service, and are the comfort and consolation of the sick and dying, when they have frequently no one else to care for them.

The Sisters of Charity are at all the hospitals, as voluntary nurses, and meet with every one's respect; to which, indeed, they are so deservedly entitled.

The kitchen at Bon Sauveur is very large, extremely clean, and appeared to be conducted on a very liberal scale, for I saw plenty of good things preparing for the poor wretches, to whom food for the body becomes doubly entertaining, as they dispense with every thing like aliment for the mind.

I saw all the different stages of insanity that were allowed to be visible. Some were in listless, vacant attitudes: one or two men were walking very fast on a short terrace, evidently very intent upon something (poor souls! it would be difficut to say *what*). One poor Englishwoman appeared in a very excited state, from having just seen a countryman before I entered, as I was informed, having sufficient sanity left to appreciate the luxury, and bitterly feel its loss.

I heard some women in another garden singing!

How very horrible! human beings bereft of intellect, not knowing the difference of one day from another, to whom all faces were alike — yet still singing!

There were about a dozen confined in a place without windows, who were howling most piteously in their madness. These, I was told, were "furious," and I fancied they had ample cause to be so, fastened in the dismal den they were in. Otherwise it seemed exceedingly well regulated, with a "method in the madness" of its arrangements it might be profitable to imitate. There was a small farm, poultry yard, and piggery, with a large four-horse van, or carriage, to give the poor invalids an airing in occasionally.

The price of admission varies from five thousand francs a year, with a detached cottage, garden, and attendants, to three hundred and fifty, the sum paid by the poor mad folks of "Calvados"— the department in which the Maison de Santé is situated, with various steps in the charges, from the highest to the lowest, which I have stated.

Poor Brummel, the beau "par excellence," died in this retreat. I saw his little room, and old attendant: both were exceedingly clean, and the former very comfortable, with windows facing a pretty quiet garden full of flowers. The little wardrobe, and small shaving glass, that served for the Beau's last toilette, "pointed a moral" in the tale the old lady adorned with the account of his last moments. Once the petted companion of a King, (put not your trust

in princes!) the leader of fashion in London for years, with an education and fortune as ample as most men, to die in a foreign mad-house — fed by charity! — might well attune the mind to moralising.

I made considerable inquiry about Brummel's habits and mode of life when living at Caen, and found a Frenchman who knew him intimately. He said, — "Ah! Monsieur Brummul was quite an infant in money matters; if he got thousand pounds, wiff! it went away very quick." My informant spoke half in English. He was, he said, "excessivement poli, avec une manière bien élevée et distinguée:" he was always "bon ton," with much grace. "To the Dames—ma foi! His bow was perfect: they all adored Monsieur: in dress, he was always particularly clean and neat." Poor fellow, he was our consul at Caen, till he ingenuously, and truly, told the government there was no occasion for the office, — offering to retire; no doubt expecting something else, perhaps better. The officials at home took the appointment, and left him to starve, to their eternal disgrace. His friend Armstrong (who, by the way, is just dead, leaving an excellent character amongst all who knew him, both French and English) stuck to him to the last. He arranged all his affairs and foreign liabilities, and succeeded in getting him a pension from his former friends in England, that sufficed for the poor Beau, till he was carried out of "Bon Sauveur," and buried in the English (or rather Protestant) ceme-

tery at Caen, where I saw his modest epitaph. He lies quite "comme il faut," amongst a heap of wild fennel, strawberries, and such rank, horrid grass, as you only find near the dead. The place is sadly neglected, and completely overgrown with briars.

Most of the tombs have shared the fate of the dust they would, in vain, try to remind us of, "being out of sight," if not out of mind. The old woman, (the grave digger's cara sposa), who showed the rarities of the dismal scene (a ghostly pleasure ground it seemed), pointed out an English Milor, a suicide, and the poor Beau's last resting place in particular—as great attractions. They are her stock-in-trade, and she piously hopes the inscriptions may last her time, or for the lives of the young moles she trusts may succeed her, in turning up the ground, and showing the place.

Brummel died in 1840, aged sixty-two, and seems to have possessed more attainments than the world gave him credit for. His dandyism, like that of all English gentlemen, consisted merely in the most perfect cleanliness; he was too acute and sarcastic to make dress the matter of absurd importance it is generally believed he did.

As Captain Jesse says in his "Life of Brummel," "he only dressed peculiarly neat, with exquisite taste, and always the same, and we would all most willingly have imitated him, if we *could*." It is a pity we have not more models of this school of attire in

our own day, for contemptible as the subject is, there is a great and lasting moral in dress, as conducive to favouring first impressions or otherwise (no slight consideration); for in any matter of diplomacy, however trifling, who does not look, and judge somewhat from the outside, and form their opinion of the character and habits of the "tenant-at-will?"

Brummel's morning-dress, of a brown surtout coat, blue pantaloons, and well-brushed fairly-balanced hat, with the inimitably tied white cravat, — is *now*, with all the change of fashion's ridiculously changing mode, a dress very difficult to improve. It is fit for either service, "horse or foot," a promenade with ladies, a congress of sporting men, or a call on the Premier, or Queen, if needful. It is sufficiently sober, yet gay enough for any thing; and I maintain there *is* a moral in alluding to it.

For the drawing-room there never was any thing equal to the shoe and silk stocking, which Brummel always thought due to a lady.

The contrast of this decent, cleanly garb, to the horrible long-flapped coats of all colours, the dreadful, terrific waistcoats, and worse pantaloons, puckered in festoons, and covering all the foot, as worn by the men in this country, without a feature to be seen, for a mass of crisp, grisly, "yellow and dun" hair (the prevailing "hackle") — only requires naming, to be thoroughly imagined. Frenchmen are, with-

out exception, the very worst drest men in the world; and I am singular enough not so particularly to admire the mode of the fair dames in all instances as it is the clamour to do — especially when they make their appearance at a table d'hôte in a morning, in dresses evidently indicating the absence of all whalebone, giving a loose slatternly air to the person, quite inconsistent with my notion of a female breakfast companion.

I remember too vividly, the perfectly tidy, neat, and almost *tight* rounded bust and slender waist, of some of England's women, none of which did I ever see in France. — And ah! where are the teeth and hands to compare to those of my country-women? I *could* not be ill-natured in my remarks on women—the country does not exist in which I do not worship the sex — but I am compelled to say that I have looked in, vain for a really pretty hand, and filbert nail, and have been equally unfortunate in my search (of course I mean generally) for a mouthful of white, even teeth (not pearls "set in coral lips," or any such Birmingham trash, but), a set of clean, well-brushed white teeth, a comfort, as well as beauty, that is no rarity in England — Allah be praised!

LETTER XII.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. — DISPUTED TITLE. — CHILDREN OF LIBERTY. — POLITICAL ORGIES. — ÉMEUTE OF TAILORS. — HATRED OF RANK IN FRANCE. — ANCIENT ARMORIAL BEARINGS. — REMINISCENCE OF ENGLAND. — A GENTLEMAN'S COTTAGE IN THE COUNTRY. — A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER. — THE RECEPTION. — ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE. — THE COTTAGE. — THE STABLE AND SADDLE-ROOM. — COMFORTS OF HOME.

THE next great man in importance to the "Beau," who is buried at Caen, is William the Conqueror. He is (or rather was) buried in the fine old church of Saint Etienne, a specimen of pure Norman architecture. It looked ominous from the commencement for his repose, tradition saying that the vault prepared for the royal dust and ashes was in ground duly consecrated, but not "precisely paid for." It is asserted, that the owner of the property rushed in amongst the knightly host of mourners, and in a stentorian voice forbad the ceremony, and, in spite of all the priests and bigwigs in armour, stuck out for his rights like a man, in which he was backed by the populace, who saw an attempt at establishing a precedent not exactly to their interests. The man got the money, and the funeral was completed, but it was all "thrown away," for during the revolution "the

children of liberty" came and rooted up the bones, which they scattered to the winds, for what cause or reason nobody seemed to know. One leg bone was secured, and reburied afterwards with becoming pomp! but the cherubs had another dig for it, at a future orgy they held upon political matters, and I sincerely hope they are now satisfied.

If there is a strike amongst the tailors (or émeute, as they call it), I fully expect they will dig up poor Brummel: they cannot let so great a man in their way alone. There is not a symbol of antiquity or "honourable blazon" that is not mutilated, if not obliterated, by the lovers of equality. There is hardly a relic of the old French nobility that has escaped. I saw one or two very ancient shields in my walks,— one in Harfleur church, with the quarterings of an English family. They have, no doubt, escaped by accident, with a fate only deferred.

You will find you have given me a "roving commission," in permitting me to make use of reminiscences: they are recollection's brood, and disport themselves with great latitude.

When "the pleasures of memory" point the pen, words *will* flow from her stores as we roam in fancy's view o'er former scenes.

What a comforting, heart-warming sensation comes over you, as you enter a sincere friend's country dwelling in England, — perhaps, after a long absence abroad. You walk up to his gates, and are im-

pressed with the neat, decorous air of even the little pleasure ground and garden encircling his cottage. The gravel walks and grass are rolled together, as smooth as mosaic. The lilacs, laburnums, and mountain ash, in their several seasons: the ample lawn and meadow are divided by a sunk fence. The soothing cry of the rooks, or scream of the peacock, comes across your senses as "old reminiscences" of a gentleman's place.

When the door is opened to you by the neat and clean domestic, the little hall, with the master's hunting whip, and well-brushed hats hanging on the branching antlers of a stag, bring the features of the owner, as well as of "other days," vividly before you. The very *smell* of the house is countrified,— one it is impossible to counterfeit. There is an air of tranquillity and repose about it, that is cheering in the extreme.

You are ushered into the dining-room, where sits your friend and his wife, after an absence of ten years. When you left home, he was in your own present miserable state — a bachelor. You return and find him "not half the man he was,"—the missing and infinitely *better* part being centered in the sweet, unaffected, bonny-looking woman opposite to him! The joyous exclamation of surprise, the hearty, almost shoulder-dislocating shake of the hand, the mutual very slightest moistening of the eye, quickly precede the introduction to his "missus."

He forces you into the easy chair, orders up the cold sirloin and pickles, then draws a cork, that only knows the screw on such and "such like" occasions.

How you chat! look into the second bottle (merely out of *curiosity!*) find out the gray hairs, and congratulate yourselves it is no worse.

The tea is ready in the drawing-room, the charming partner of your friend gives you a little music,— the barrel of oysters, with hot and cold water, make their appearance, when, after another hour's delightful intercourse, you are shown by your old comrade to your chamber.

The next day is Sunday. — You find your clothes brushed and folded — the shaving water smoking on your table, and hear the hearty voice of your host shouting to know if you require any thing for your toilette?

You breakfast with the windows open, then walk to church over the fields, the sweet bells of which are chiming melodiously at a mile's distance.

Impressed with the calm and tranquillising feeling of the "Sabbath-day," which, in the absence of a more sacred one, is beneficial and soothing in its influence and weekly advent in England, *and in no other country to be found,* you enter the ancient village church, and join the rustic, well-behaved congregation, — hear a plain, excellent discourse, and probably bring the worthy rector home with you to dine.

Before you wash your hands you must see your host's improvements; he has planting and draining to show you, as well as a colt or two, of which he expects great things. (No parent admires a squinting child more affectionately than a man sees beauties in an animal "like a rail," with neither back nor shoulders, provided only he has bred him.) So you go on whilst you visit your friend. In the morning you ride to the market-town, hear the news, and probably dine with the farmers, (the dear jolly fellows!)

If it is winter, your host mounts you, to see "the meet," or you look for a cock or a snipe. If it is summer, his "Missus" gets up a pic-nic, has the cow milked on the lawn for the young ladies' syllabubs, and gives you a quadrille in the cool of the evening. Whatever season you arrive in, you are welcome, and if not happy, it is your own fault.

What order, propriety, and method, you see in a house of this description, one of every-day occurrence in England amongst the middle classes. How *tidy* every thing is. The Venetian blinds, during the heat of the day, with the outside striped canvass awnings — the soft carpet — the open piano — the last magazine — the flowers — lady's gloves, and fine engravings on the walls, all bespeak comfort and refinement.

Then the cloth laid for dinner, the green glasses, emblazoned damask, highly-polished plate, and wine-

cooler, with the "neat half-dozen" laid in wicker and green-baize for immediate service. Where do you meet with these things? in England, and in England only.

Let us go into the four-stalled stable, — what skins, what bone, what blood, in the four nags, grinding corn out of the neat iron mangers! There is not a straw out of its place, some is plaited equal to the handiwork of a bonnet-maker, by the groom and his strapper, in praiseworthy stable pride, and laid down, "when stables are finished."

What a sweet little saddle room, matted all round, and hung with snaffle, pelham, and double-reined bridles. The harness, plain and handsome, the "pig's skin," the whipstocks, with a sporting print or two, and bugle hanging over the little fire-place. Where do you look for this scene? in merry, clean, and sporting England only.

If you like a brace of good setters, our host is famous for his breed, and boasts more of their blood than his own; — if you walk into his gun-room, you will find it amply stocked with doubles and singles of the best make and finish, fly and trolling rods, books on woodcraft, and other subjects, with full amusement for a wet day. But it is time to dress for dinner; you must be punctual to-day, for I know a turbot was left at the gate by the "Magnet," on which, and a haunch of four-year old mutton, I hope you will be able to make a dinner — would that I

could say "nous verrons"! This reminiscence is rather unphilosophical on my part, remembering the table d'hôte awaiting me,—the rush-bottomed chair, tiled floor, black bottle of "small wine," with my napkin for a cravat: but there is a valuable moral in it for those who read it at home. The contrasts I have attempted to pourtray, are all underdrawn in the minute daily fare and habits of the "tight little island" and the continent. That natural atmosphere of "home," of our long-accustomed, inherent sensation and knowledge of *being* there, it is impossible to describe.

Freedom of thought and action, as well as from espionage, — safety of person, and gratification of taste, in our sporting, manly, countrified pursuits, are truly only to be met with in Great Britain.

> "Ye gentlemen of England, who live at home at ease,
> How little do you *think* upon"

the comforts, delights, and decencies, of your own daily life, till you have lost them. You should be *forced* to live abroad for a couple of years, to learn the contrast. Then, I fancy, the Channel steamers would not be so crammed with our gaping, restless countrymen, who are the nearest illustration that I know to "perpetual motion,"—and come to be *smiled* at generally, wash in a saucer, be imposed upon at every turn, and eat the "allotted peck" long before their time.

LETTER XIII.

ADIEU TO CAEN. — THE "NEUSTRIE." — ENGLISH ENGINEERS. — ENGLISH AND FRENCH REFLECTION. — SCHOOL OF PYTHAGORAS. — EARLY HOUR OF STARTING. — FRENCH CAPTAIN. — "ASHORE!" — THE BANK OF PHILOSOPHY. — DIFFICULT NAVIGATION. — "OYSTERHAM." — THE CABARET. — FRENCH CHARGES. — FRENCH MANAGEMENT AND FRENCH SHRUG. — THE GALLIOT AND DANISH SKIPPER. — DIFFERENCE IN SAILORS. — HEAVY SEA. — HAVRE.

At length I congratulate myself on being able to say I have cleared out of Caen. So sick had I become of the place, that being obliged to rise at three o'clock in the morning, to take the steamer at four, did not in the least annoy me. On the contrary, I felt quite relieved and buoyant as I walked through the silent, dismal streets, to the river side, where I found the "Neustrie," putting on all the steam she could muster to pull herself out of the mud, there being just an inch or two short of the needful fluid to float her.

The engineer promised to do his utmost, and fortunately succeeded in getting clear of the bottom sufficiently to make a start of it. I found he was an Englishman, and that most of the French steamers are driven by our countrymen. It is no

less a tribute to our superiority in mechanics, than a source of pardonable pride in our men. They all say, "Master Crapaud cannot manage the tea-kettle: they either never make it boil, or otherwise blow the bottom out:" this remark I heard made by one of the stokers. It is somewhat strange that such clever men in mathematics, temperate livers, and excessively "au fait" in trifles — cannot compete with our beef-fed, ruminating islanders, in any matter of modern improvement, where head-piece is required.

This is no matter of boasting; it is proved by the incapacity they confess to, in being obliged to ask our assistance. It is the same in machine-making, cloth-dressing, and in the manufactures of cotton. In all these undertakings Englishmen are employed as pilots, in all the delicate portions of the work. I have thought this over, as well as asked the question, more than once, and firmly believe it is an arrangement of nature that it should be so.

The French are triflers in the extreme, and talk far too much to arrive at any thing solid in the same time as a silent indefatigable Briton. *His* business is never finished; his mind is always turning over projects, plans, and profits, for future days; his very dreams are driven by steam.

The French haste to the promenade, the theatre, or cafés, to escape reflection — and then they chatter upon so many subjects that it is perfectly impossible to *retain one.*

If our neighbours were to establish schools on the "Pythagorean" system, it might perhaps help them to a few national engineers for the next generation. But the ancient Dominie's plan of giving all his scholars a probationary *five years'* spell at "silence," that they might "learn to meditate, and unlearn to talk," would be a sad overwhelming trial to every thing French that it has been my fate to meet with hitherto.

The passengers kept dropping on board in the dark, and formed a miserable group, indeed, of the "infatuati" or pleasure tourists, half awake, tumbling over the baggage, and cheated by the rascally porters. The morning wretchedly damp, and foggy into the bargain.

At last, the captain gave us to understand, in a very polite speech, that wind and tide neither waited, nor *came*, at even a Frenchman's bidding; that he would at all events quit his moorings, proceed down the river, and get as far as he could. "He felt sure we had the prospect of a most delightful day before us." Any thing in *his* power, in the way of information or amusement, he should be too charmed to offer; "he was not without dominoes, and had a cuisine on board,"—what more could be required?

After feeling our way for about twenty miles, passing many English brigs and schooners, freighted with coal for Caen,—"bump ashore we went," and very soon found ourselves "hard and fast" for at

least ten mortal hours, and, just possibly, for all the night. Then it was that I quietly drew a cheque upon my old trust-worthy friend and banker, "Philosophy," for rather a stiffish amount; and found I had not over-drawn my account, I am grateful to say. I first ordered breakfast; paid my respects, with feeling and sincerity, to some café au lait and mutton cutlets; then I opened the knapsack for the quire of paper, pens, and ink,—and derived immediate pleasure, in the faint hope I entertained of being able to afford it to *you*.

The day has turned out beautifully fine, with a sky over head perfectly cloudless. The river soon became like a narrow gutter in width, with broad, dry sand-banks on all sides. It is extremely difficult to navigate; the track is marked out nearly at every fathom, in places; yet, even with all this precaution, it is frequently missed by vessels, who get on the banks, and are occasionally wrecked by the wet sand shifting, and heeling them over. I saw a large brig at Caen undergoing a very heavy repair, from the severe damages she had sustained in consequence of missing the channel. After scribbling some time on the deck of the vessel, I jumped ashore to look at the country,—which was an elbow of Normandy, washed by the sea, the river running down one arm of it. We had brought up opposite to a village called "Oysterham;" whither all the passengers had long since proceeded, to forage the place, and hunt for

adventures. I had the good fortune to fall in with a French gentleman and his son from Havre; the former spoke English fluently, having resided long in America. To my young friend, I am indebted for the spirited sketch I send you, of a "walking gentleman" in marching order.

We formed an alliance for dinner at an auberge; when, after a stroll in the country, (which I found was a continuation of my Longrune and Luc promenade), and entering the church, another very fine specimen of English architecture, we dined in a bed-room, off anything but dainties, as you may imagine. When the bill was called, we thought for an instant we were at Very's, in the Palais Royal, every thing being charged *à la carte*, quite equal to, or rather dearer than, Paris. My French companion very coolly struck off part of the bill, threw down the balance (three times the worth of the entertainment), and wished the aubergiste adieu! He was equally polite, bowed most gracefully in all his dirt, concluding with a shrug, to imitate which, I would most cheerfully have dined and paid over again; it produced an expression in the man's countenance, that was physiognomical eloquence itself;—submission and philosophy, — discussion, loss of temper, and trouble avoided,—a ready reckoner of the present, and future profit (or chance of it), were all palpably delineated, and "set to music," by the muscles of the back.

English shoulders cannot attain this indescribable

accomplished "shrug;" if they remain a life-time in the country, it is next to an impossibility.

I had very nearly got through the amount of the cheque in this waste of time, and was heartily glad to perceive symptoms of the tide serving, when we approached the banks of the river once more. I boarded a large Danish galliot, who, like ourselves, was short of water, with every probability of such being the case for several days to come, she having a heavy draught of it. The "skipper" was a fine jolly Dirk Hatterick looking fellow, who spoke a little English, with the most amusing Norse accent. He had the very bluest eyes I ever beheld, perfectly cerulean, with a pair of whiskers like a fox's brush, so immensely large and fiery red were they, yet the expression of his countenance was open and manly in the extreme. What an index to the great volume of the world is the face of every man, as he hails from the north or south, the east or the west? This man told you in his eye, "he was a Dane."

The Frenchman, with his beard, dark twinkling eye, his ear-rings and red sash, says, I am a matelot of the "grande nation."

The Yankee, with his large Panama hat, swarthy visage, domineering gait, and suspicious glance, proclaims himself a sailor of the stars and stripes. Our own jolly, plain-sailing, sweet-heart loving "Jack," in his ringlets, devil-may-care, generous looks, cannot be mistaken. The

skipper of the galliot, was a faithful chronicle of the creation, superior to Hume or Smollett, — his blue eye, red beard, and above all the expression, were a lesson in geography that could not be misunderstood. He moreover produced a capital Dutch cheese and some black bread, which I enjoyed amazingly, particularly the hard-baked, black rye biscuit of singular sweetness. I then asked my blue-eyed friend to visit the steamer with another Swedish captain, and had much pleasure in offering them a glass of "vin ordinaire" (all they would take) in return for the good cheer I had met with on board the galliot. They were both extremely well-behaved men, and completely exemplified "commerce," in the way they occupied their time and vessels. They were freighted in the first instance, with deals for Caen, from Norway. Their next port was Sunderland, whence they took a cargo of coals to Hamburgh, which they there exchanged for a general one of necessaries and luxuries for their own northern consumption, concluding the year with a freight of staves for the herring-fisheries in the Orkneys, when they laid up for the winter.

There was a spare berth in the clean little cabin of the galliot, that I felt a strong inclination to occupy, from the pressing offer of the jolly skipper, whose country he gave me to understand was infinitely preferable in every thing that could be named or fancied, to any thing that he had ever seen. It

is one that I have the greatest desire to visit, and hope to be gratified some day, when time and its arrangements will chime in with another such opportunity. We had a most intricate course to steer, after leaving our old moorings, passing close under the stern of the galliot, then almost high and dry, on a sand-bank, which her pilot had selected for showing off her beauties.

There stood her blue-eyed commander, who raised his hat to us as we steamed past him: saying "Goot boy," and showing a head of hair, whiskers, and eyebrows, that reminded me of a litter of foxes, any one of them large enough for cub hunting.

After getting clear of the river we found a most unpleasant cross sea. The "Newstric" rolled paddles under in the most horrible manner, giving most on board ample reason to lament the outlay in the "provend and vivers," (as Dugald Dalgetty termed eatables) at Oysterham, all being eventually "thrown away." I am happy to say I escaped the malady, and landed once more at Havre, just as my old friend the "Rainbow," was hoisting her ensign, and splashing away for England.

LETTER XIV.

LA CHASSE. — GREAT PREPARATION FOR IT. — FRENCH CHASSEURS. — BULL FIGHT AT PAMPELUNA. — THE QUEEN OF SPAIN AND DUCHESS DE NEMOURS. — NARVAEZ. — "THE HORSE!"— HOMER, VIRGIL, AND JOB'S DESCRIPTION OF HIM. — DETESTABLE CRUELTY. — STAMMERING FRENCHMAN.—REMINISCENCE OF THE FIRST OF SEPTEMBER.

Havre, 1st of September, 1845.

EVERY man is preparing for "la chasse," you hear nothing else spoken of, from morning till night, as if there was *really* game in the country. Nothing will escape these indefatigable chasseurs, every flying, creeping, and jumping thing, from a frog to a nightingale, will suffer in the campaign, if the most artful stratagem can accomplish its destruction. "Quail and Perdrix," are in every mouth, they set the tongue rattling in the imaginary slaughter, and tickle the palate in the fancied dainty.

Mighty few will you see in these parts, you may rest assured, though they serve a great purpose, in affording a constant topic for conversation, and in putting every thing on a warlike footing. Fusils, curs, and capacious game bags are in great request; leathern gaiters, with immense buckles, brigand-looking apparel, with the features of a pioneer on

service form the terrible looking Chasseur of France, as he marches solemnly against the poor "twittering foe." The understanding between master and dog, as verbally expressed by the former, is something exquisite. The encouragement to work, the frequent caution and awful threats, make the woods and fields ring with oaths and soothings, alternately complimentary and furious. I once saw a battle between a chasseur and his dog, in which the latter, whose blood contained more than one cross of bull and mastiff, got considerably the best of it. This interesting scene took place in a field of Millioc, not far from the Pyrenees,—the dog's name was "Castor." To return to la chasse,—the hero, on his return to his café, is beset with admirers: no man alive is more enamoured of the words campagne and la chasse, than a Frenchman, and I take it no one knows much less of either. Here gendarmes are your game-keepers; and if you don't stand and deliver your sparrows when called upon, you will be in danger from a carbine or sabre. Every thing is in great order,—no shooting is permitted in time of snow.

The head keeper is a chevalier of the Legion of honour, and has his rules stuck up all over the country. Every thing is looked upon as "game," in France, from Roulette, to a Tomtit. Starlings are regularly to be seen in the markets for sale, with other diminutive wretches, stripped of their

gay plumage, leaving it difficult to say what they resemble.

"Not a sparrow can fall from the house-tops," except under licence of a "port d'armes." Grantley Berkeley is insipid in his Code of Laws and Punishments, in comparison with the French, on this subject. . . . . .

I have just read an account of a "Bull Fight," at Pampeluna, at which the young Queen of Spain, the gentle Duchess de Nemours, and some 15,000 people of all ages and sexes, "assisted," as it is termed, "after Mass had been duly attended!"

The scene is described most vividly, and would cause a thrill of horror and disgust through any female mind not that of a butcher's daughter or a Lady Macbeth. We are told, in the first instance, how the Duke de Nemours and his brother were in "plain clothes," and had the honour of handing to the stage box, the different Queens and Princesses, who were wreathed in mantillas, smiles, and every outward appearance of the gentle sex, as birth, education, and mental susceptibility, would naturally form them.

The sanguinary blood-thirsty assassin, Narvaez, (the fit successor to a "bravo,") stood in becoming state, as prime minister of Spain, behind the youthful Queen, as she "formally sanctioned the commencement of the fight."

The bulls were goaded, wounded, and maddened to rage and despair, by every device, inherent in

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their sullen savage tormentors, who only loved in days of yore, to practise on each other a far more refined system of torture, and are just as much inclined for it as ever. So much for the bulls, who in heat, terror, agony, and surprise, were at length, "slaughtered, at the queen's command."

But, now comes the fate of "the horse!" the noble, the spirited, the faithful, the beautiful horse; whom the Romans made into a consul, and Job into one of the most supremely beautiful themes that language ever uttered; whom Homer and Virgil both eulogized in ever-breathing verse; whom every good man loves, cherishes, and feeds, in preference to any want of his own; whom the Arab and his family make into a friend and companion. "In whose nostrils, rolls collected fire." *He* is gored to death, a lingering, cruel, and ignominious death, to pander to the savage barbarous tastes of a country, that the Almighty has suffered to become the prey of the stock jobber, and assassin!

Talk not to me of the splendour, the antiquity, the association of such sights! they demoralize the heart, and tune it to hardness and cruelty; and are only the relics of an age, handed to another, in which if the *will* was there, the power is wanting to put a stop to them. But the deep-seated love of blood, the relish for torture and inflicting pain, are too strong in the Spanish breast, to call for any attempt at their suppression.

To the ruthless tyrant Narvaez these sanguinary horrors, are a fitting *pastime*, after his wholesale human murders; and any change, (except for the worse) is hopeless indeed, whilst such monsters rule the land. And the young Queen! the gentle Duchess, and other maidens, who love the guitar and moonlight serenade, were willing, delighted witnesses to the noble horse being slaughtered by an infuriated animal, who but for man's hellish incitement would have grazed peaceably by his side on the prairie, or stood with him amicably in the pool, as they cooled themselves in the mid-day sun.

"His leg was broken" we are told, "his entrails were protruding," as he lay "weltering in his gore, *degraded* and sacrificed, amidst the "yells and bravoes" of the spectators. I once saw a horse's leg broken by accident, and remember right well his "full and speaking eye;" the sweat ran off him in his agony, and I turned away unmanned at the affecting sight.

I absolutely *love* a horse, after I have had him a short time, from my very *heart!* I talk to him, look in his eye for his answer, (what a clear, expressive, intelligent eye it is!) take his soft sweet muzzle in my hands, and have kissed him a thousand times.

How he bounds under you — neighs when you enter his stable — he knows your very footstep; when he is ill, how you lament over him; no attention is too great, and how grateful he appears! he will eat

out of your hand, is harmless to the youngest child, *and will not tread on a wounded man;* yet his courage is of the lion, for, in the beautiful language of Job, "he mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword."

This is the animal selected for the murderous exhibition at Pampeluna, to gratify the travelling princes, (and alas! princesses,) of la belle France. If I had the misfortune to have a wife who took pleasure in such sanguinary scenes, I would not eat with her if she had a knife in her hand, nor would I close my eyes in her presence. The least cause of offence would suffice, to a heart that could see twenty horses mangled and butchered as they were, blood flowing in torrents, and hear the yells of the "demons of the scene" without sickening. O the gentle soft heart of woman! whose tear is ever ready to fall at the sight of pain and suffering, *could* not have been present at this dreadful orgy. Thank God! we have no bull fights in our catalogue of female amusements; and that the horse, above all, is one of the first objects of our affection, after the fair beings that we love.

My pen has "run riot" on this frightful subject, and you will, perhaps, think me prosy; but it is one that calls for the utter detestation of every refined and humane breast, and a female crusade, to suppress the foul and hateful taste displayed in so many of their sex.

I rejoice, indeed, to see in the list of fashionables who attended the "sports," that there was any quantity of Dons, Chevaliers, and Monseigneurs, with their wives, betrothed, and daughters; but *no English.*

To change the subject, I must tell you how exquisitely I was tickled the other day by a rencontre with a stammering Frenchman. We had some little dispute, when the rage and violence of the fellow, deprived of half his utterance, were tremendous and ludicrous in the extreme. There are many words in the French language that will not permit dividing even by a stammer, at least they appeared so shorn of their fair proportions, that it was impossible for me to comprehend one word of the discourse, which doubly increased the vehemence with which it was *stuttered.*

This is the "first of September!" a day of yore, that was wont to set the blood dancing, when "life and all was young." How sleepless was the last night in August, when after placing all our apparatus to be laid hold of in the dark, if needful, we retired to a troubled doze!

The very garb of a shooter in my day, was so tidy, and comfortable withal! the neat short light jacket, with pockets just large enough for your flask. The shot chargers in your double row of waistcoat pockets (of the same material as your jacket), your well laced boots greased for the wet sweeds, coloured

clean cravat *and chin*, with your usual hat, with a hole or two punched in it for air, and old "dress gloves," with the thumb and finger off, to enable you the more readily to find the caps. This dress gave you a *decent* unencumbered feel, as you clutched your well finished double gun, and bounded over the wide drain into the "patch of potatoes," where your three young dogs are backing the old bitch, who has found the first covey. How audibly your heart beats as you hold up your hand and walk to the point! and how it *jumps* as the strong birds rise and make the air ring with a whirl, like the sound of a rocket! Of *course* you miss; but the old cool hand with you (your friend and tutor) brings down "right and left," proceeds to halloo to one of the young dogs to "down charge;" and then quietly does the same to his gun, after marking the covey into a twenty-acre field of turnips. Your next shot is better, a brace of birds being justly due to your prowess, when you look upon yourself as a hero indeed, and reload in true complacency. Your last wad is scarcely "home," before you receive a fresh shock from an "old hare," that starts up at your very feet, and scours like a mad thing with her long ears laid back, under the rattling turnip leaves, putting up a cock pheasant in her career, and yourself in a state to be "knocked down by a feather." You blaze away both barrels, cutting a beautiful large turnip into "smithereens," quite two yards

behind her. Then your practised companion quickly lays on his "Joe Manton," as the doomed hare is cutting like a flash of lightning through her well known sylvan sallyport, and tumbles her into the field of stubble, "wiping your eye" most effectually into the bargain. The noble bird, whizzing his flight to the neighbouring copse of oak and alder, receives an amiable promissory squint, *at a month's date*, down the trusty "Joseph," denoting a less lenient reception should the interview be repeated, — but now the finger of the sportsman presses not the trigger on the gay and whirring long tail, that sadly tries to "lead him into temptation," — his self-control is proof, and more than Roman, as he sighs through his clenched teeth, and instantly "recovers" his gun and forbearance. Then comes the lunch, perhaps brought by the ladies, — the counting "the bag," the disputed shots; and after a fagging day, you arive at home for dinner. When the Irish stew, marrow bones, and hot apple-pie, (all selected because they "will not spoil,") are discussed with an appetite becoming the "first of September," one bottle of old port, after the few glasses of Madeira, at dinner, sees you both fast asleep in your easy chairs, in which the "old bitch" (promoted to the hearth rug) joins you most melodiously, — she finding birds, and you bringing them down in your dreams. The ladies, God bless them! whispering

over their work, being far too kind-hearted to disturb you. A vision like this I shall be only too happy to enjoy, after I "turn in" the little French bed, that has been several hours expecting me, — so good night!

LETTER XV.

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS. — CHARLOTTE CORDAY. — THE DYING STUDENT. — AFRICAN GLORY. — THE PINK'D ARAB. — THE GROTTOES OF DAHRA. — GALE OF WIND. — GALLANTRY OF ENGLISH BOAT'S CREW AND FRENCH PILOT. — OFFICIAL "BLARNEY." — WRETCHED HARBOUR AT HAVRE. — FRENCH AMUSEMENTS, "THE FAIR." — EVERYTHING "SOLID." — A CASE OF CHEATING. — "KICKING AGAINST THE PRICKS." — ILLIBERALITY.

Havre, September 1845.

THERE is an exhibition of paintings (or Museum as it is called,) now open at Havre, which greatly to the liberality of the country is free to all without a word much less a shilling, and equally be it told to the honour of it, the indulgence is never abused by the least injury to any thing. Though there are not many particularly good pictures, the room is large and airy, and forms an agreeable lounge on a wet day, with constant amusement and instruction to be gathered from every subject, if you will only look for them. Paintings are often silent eloquence in the different scenes or events they would depict, and combine poetry, scenery, and history at a glance. I was particularly struck with one painting, that was executed, in my humble opinion, "to the life." The subject was the assassination of

Marat, by Charlotte Corday. She has just *completed the deed,* and is in the hands of the "children of *liberty!*" Marat is in the bath, which is formed of his own gore; and appears completely full of *blood:* death is stamped on his vile features.

The expression of the woman's countenance is the worth of the picture, so calm, so serene, so perfectly free from excitement or triumph is it pourtrayed, with an air (I could almost fancy) of astonishment, at the fortitude that had so long supported her. Her face is deadly pale, the fine expressive eyes are lifted up to Heaven as if in gratitude for the success of her mission, with the most perfect resignation as to the consequences, for which she had long prepared herself. That small white hand you see seems far too feminine to have driven the poignard home into the monster's heart, but it was nerved by a holy purpose, and never was crime more worthy of forgiveness, (I am almost tempted to say "canonisation,") than that of Charlotte Corday.

She had read and heard with horror of the ruthless, sanguinary career of the demon Marat, that neither God nor man seemed to have power to check. The tears and best blood of France seemed to flow at the monster's bidding, and sorrow and wailing to take possession of the land. "She pondered these things in her heart," and resolved upon freeing her country from the scourge by becoming his executioner. For this purpose did she quietly

leave her home in the country, secreting the keen weapon on her person. She found her way up to Paris unaided, and unfriended, without making a single confidante. After many fruitless attempts to obtain an interview with Marat, she followed him to his bath and was admitted, *when she instantly stabbed him to the heart!* She is attired in a pale blue dress, rather open in front, displaying a womanly moulded bust, and wears one of the unpretending caps (or bonnets) of the country in which she lived, I believe, La Vendée. Her age appears to be about five-and-twenty; the expression of her countenance denotes a warm, feminine, yet resolute heart. It was no doubt her "mission" upon earth, and I would gladly bargain to be as sure of future peace as Charlotte Corday.

There is a small painting, of a student in bed, attended by a Sister of Charity. He is evidently dying, yet his pale death-like features and soft-beseeching eyes tell the sad tale of his heart in his last moments. They are fixed upon the face of the fair sister in firm but hopeless love.

The little room, his few books, guitar, and humble efforts at elegance, are extremely touching and affecting, while death is hovering over the scene.

You see the "lamp is burnt low," and that the poor student will shortly be at rest.

There are several paintings, on African Glory! in the room, a theme excessively pleasing. One is

the representation of an hussar, pinking a huge Arab, in the most approved style of quatre and tierce. He has run him completely through the body between the fifth and sixth rib, turning the Arab's long musket aside, with quite a Champs Elysées nonchalant air and genteelly gloved hand, as their steeds are plunging across the plain, showing how easy such matters are effected (on canvass). This painting has constant gazers and admirers. The "baking scene" in the Grottoes of Dahra would be a fit companion to it, if an artist could be found sufficiently depraved to depict such horrors, and hand them to posterity.

We have had a tremendous gale of wind from the S.W., with such a sea running in any contrivance worthy the name of "harbour," I never witnessed.

Vessels were rolling "yard arm and yard arm," figure-heads and bulwarks smashing with the most terrible yells, shrieks, and *sacrés*, mingled with the howling of the tempest—enough to make hair naturally curly stand instantly on end. It is worse than the open sea, with the wind at N. and N. W., without the least order, or organized controul, to check the uproar and confusion. An efficient harbour-master is greatly wanted at Havre, and the absence of such a functionary felt accordingly.*

* The great want of energy and method, as well as everything like a disposition for dispatch, displayed in all the officials connected with this naturally fine port, when added to the "old lady-like" regulations attending it, form a constant theme of in-

The sea made a complete breach over the pier, giving ample opportunity for French eloquence and exclamation, whenever a breaker larger than usual made its approach, when the action of the spectators was intense. The French are of an amiable, infantine turn of mind in their lighter mood, and very easily amused: this trait is invaluable at head quarters, and nursed accordingly.

In returning from Honfleur the other day, a piece of paper happened to get "adrift" out of some gentleman's hat, and proceeded on a little ballooning excursion on its own account. This event was quite sufficient to keep all on the "qui vive," every one looking deeply interested, and talking incessantly, whilst the least glimpse could be obtained of the flying curiosity, and for that matter, long after it had disappeared.

An English schooner came ashore in the gale, whose hands were rescued with some difficulty as well as gallantry on the part of an English boat's crew, piloted by a Frenchman, who went off for the purpose. This circumstance has given rise to considerable official palavering, as well as some solid display of good feeling: — the French pilot receiving a gratuity at the hands of the English for his

dignant complaint, with all the English and American masters. The hindrance received by commerce at the hands of these solemn lubbers, would scarcely be credited if not actually witnessed.

humanity and courage, and the Chamber of Commerce making up a purse, to express their admiration of the bravery displayed by the British crew. The English consul writes a most courteous, complimentary note to the Chamber of Commerce (published of course). The Chamber replies in equally dulcet strains, and all parties are pleased with each other. Our Jacks and "Monsieur Crapaud" exchange pig-tail, and "hob a nob" their *petits verres*. The different merchants of the two countries flourish their hats, and display great emotion. At all events, the act of encouraging men to lend their assistance to a stranded vessel, under any circumstances, is one alike worthy the underwriter and philanthropist; it is difficult to say which has "the call" in the Chamber of Commerce at Havre, though the little affair has served to make the understanding between us of the "tri-colour" and "union jack" all the better, I sincerely rejoice to say.

There has been a fair going on here for the last four or five weeks, that has caused a constant promenade night and day—with every article for sale you can imagine, from a tooth-pick to a crucifix.

The stalls are exceedingly gay, and apparently filled with good things. Some have watches, jewellery, clocks, and other brilliant wares, that are really quite imposing in their appearance, at all events for a fair. Not being a purchaser myself, I cannot say whether this characteristic extends further. If you believe

the different merchants, everything is "*solide*" in the extreme. As "gentil" applies to everything delightful to behold, so "solide" denotes the intrinsic goodness of everything in France. Lace, pâtés, gloves, sauce-pans, images at a sou per Buonaparte, and "saints per dozen," wigs, false teeth, drums, and shuttle-cocks, are all as *solide* as the British gulls flying across the channel.

There were more than the usual shows of fat women, learned pigs, giants and dwarfs; there were some trained monkeys, who astonished the people "out of their propriety." They danced the polka, fought duels, got up a revolution, guillotined each other, bowed and scraped, and "played old gooseberry" amongst themselves. They really formed most expressive tableaux à la Français, to the delight of the spectators. Monsieur Thiers's celebrated work could not have been more exquisitely illustrated than by these astonishing little gentlemen.

The talent for imposition in this country is as brilliant as ever. It is next to impossible to steer clear of being cheated by all the lower orders whom you may come in contact with in money matters. The keenness of the French in everything relating to these is beyond any thing we can boast of, either in Monmouth Street or the far-famed lands "to the norrord of the Tweed;" it is perfectly paramount to every other thought or consideration. This devoted *amor pecuniæ* should serve their turn, one

would think, without to the incessant attempt at overcharge and chicanery, the English at all events have to suffer from invariably. If you buy a pair of shoes, you should have at least two good creditable witnesses, or the strings will be charged extra, and if you leave any thing to *them* in your transactions, very little will soon be left to *you*, you may take my word for it. « The way in which the French make petty contracts with each other before entering an inn, or even *eating a bun*, shows the little confidence they have in one another, and the great need of wariness on our part in dealing with them. I am certainly so wroth at being imposed upon on leaving Havre, that it has brought on a relapse of old bilious attacks, from which I have suffered in this country before; and I cannot refrain from expressing my firm belief, that la belle France, being short of game, an Englishman is "bagged" without compunction, — not in a fair sporting way, but by abominable poaching and stratagem. I was captured in this wise: I took apartments of a placid-looking, smooth-tongued lady, distinctly making a bargain with her for a certain sum per month, to include everything that you are generally victimised with, under the inexplicable words, "sundries" or "extras." When I received my bill, I had various items stuck in, nearly doubling the amount agreed upon. Upon expostulating, I found my curtseying, amiable landlady, (as she appeared on entering,) to be at bottom

the veriest termagant that ever excelled in French Billingsgate, — with robbery in her very heart. She declared she would not deduct a sou, daring me to show any agreement (which I was improvident enough not to get on my entrée): I, at first, as resolutely resolved upon not being "taken in and done for" by her, if I could possibly avoid it, having the justice on *my* side, if *she* boasted the eloquence and French polish. But "kicking against the pricks" with bare feet would be a pleasing pastime, compared to talking a French lodging-house keeper into honesty; and any chance of redress through any other appeal quite as hopeless, having no witnesses, and any amount of swearing against me. So I got out of the scrape, as all victims do, by paying my money, and being laughed at for my pains. I deserve less pity, from not being sufficiently cautious to obtain a written agreement, (a mode of proceeding I should never dream of in England,) but one I strongly recommend to all unfortunates "looking for lodgings" in France. I am, I confess, writing under the influence of *bile*, brought on by being cheated as I have described. I only speak as I find matters, and am very willing to admit I have had many other quarters that I have left without any great misunderstanding, though, in nearly *all*, there has been some item brought in at settling, that was not bargained for, and some so ridiculously trifling, that it was a contemptible task indeed to ask any pen to record them. If you were to remain ten

years with a French family as their lodger, I firmly believe you would be charged to a *centime* for any little thing you might fancy it was impossible to name.

This does not sound well, but it is true to the letter. The lower orders in France have not a particle of liberality or generosity. In any intercourse you may have with them, where "money changes hands," they will take it to the "uttermost farthing." You will be heartily sick of this budget of grievances and finance, but not more so than myself, so I willingly close it with "good evening to you and yours."

LETTER XVI.

EXCURSION ON FOOT.—HARFLEUR.—CHÂTEAU DE BEVILLIERS.—ORCHER.—ROUTE BY THE SEINE.—PACK OF FOX HOUNDS.—A VIEW HALLOO!—SAINT VIGOR.—WRETCHED FARE.—OVERTAKEN BY DARKNESS.—LOSE MY ROAD.—"BENIGHTED."—"COMMENT."—SAINT ROMAIN.—FATIGUE.—TANKARVILLE.—THE CHÂTEAU.—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY.—NATURE'S SHRUBBERY.—LILLEBONNE.—THE "ECSTACIES" OF LIFE.

Lillebonne, Dimanche, September 1845.

HAVING a great desire to explore the left bank of the Seine as far as Caudebec, (where you may probably remember, I told you I had taken the steamer on my return from Rouen,) I put myself into light marching trim, for a week's tour "à pied," and left Havre, as the clocks were striking ten, yesterday morning. The gale had subsided, leaving the air refreshed from its effects, the roads perfectly free from dust, and altogether as lovely a September morning as ever pedestrian was blessed with.

In the first place, I made for Harfleur, by the heights, and after proceeding through the little town, I ascended the hill, which I consider, in fact, the commencement of my present stroll. The view from it is exceedingly fine,—the mouth of the Seine opens upon you, apparently wide enough to swallow Havre,

which is situated within its very jaws. On the right, as you look towards Havre, is an extensive valley well wooded, with a large tract of table-land, highly cultivated on the summit.

To the left of the route, about a mile from Harfleur, I found the Château de Bevilliers, a hunting lodge in days of yore of the very ancient family of Mortemart. It is of no great size, but has the old-fashioned, comfortable, manor-house look of the red brick and stone style of architecture, with mullions of the latter to the large windows. The family arms surmount the entrance, evidently too difficult to get at easily by the destroyers of such antiquities. The kitchen and its fireplace have quite a baronial appearance. There is also a very fine vaulted crypt cellar under the mansion, spacious enough to hold an ample stock of wines and cider, in those days of indiscriminate hospitality. The winding stone escalier leads to the upper apartments, in one of which they told me Henri Quatre had passed the night after hunting in the neighbourhood. Every event of this jolly-hearted, chivalrous monarch is preserved and valued according to his worth. Upon leaving this château, I proceeded across the farm to that of "Orcher," belonging to the same family; it is much larger than Bevilliers, and built of the flint from the rocks and beach, in the same style as Goodwood.

There are avenues facing many of the principal windows, whose aspect is inland. The terrace front,

at an altitude of quite three hundred feet, has the most perfect uninterrupted view of the Seine, here about seven miles broad, with the town of Honfleur opposite.

The gardens are in terraces, and flanked to the left by a deep ravine, one of the first of the many glens that run far into the country from this most beautiful river. I descended, by a narrow precipitous path, down the gorge to the shores of the Seine, whose waters washed within a few feet of my own; leaving a pedestrian route, close under the beetling cliffs of flint and limestone, till I entered the vale of Oudal, and mounted the hill opposite.

My route now took a turn through the country, leaving the river to the right. The high ground was covered with fern and bilberries: the little valley below me was farmed in small patches, to each of which was attached a cottage of the humblest size: a narrow stream wound its way in the centre to the sea, appearing from the height at which I stood like a large silver eel. After an hour's walk through lanes overhung with trees, and intersecting each other in rather a bewildering manner to a stranger, I came upon a large farm-house, with numerous out-buildings, in the roughest order of masonry. However, I was welcomed most melodiously by a small pack of English fox-hounds, that were in a kind of wicker kennel in the yard, and threw up their heads on my approach, with a delicious cadence. I instantly

greeted my gallant countrymen with a halloo! that made the valley echo. I addressed them in all the names with which I fancied they might have been christened at home; but remembering that Lord Byron says a dog only recollects his master for the *time*, I thought the names of these hounds might have equally escaped their memory, so I tried both languages, addressing one handsome bitch, with a sweet eye in her ample well-formed head, by the name of "Dairymaid" and "Blanchisseuse;" one old dog I tried with "Sportsman" and "Chasseur;" to a third, sinister-looking old animal (nearly worn out), who I felt sure was "Radical" in his own country, I gave the name of "Marseillaise." Having a long walk still before me, I assured my friends how much I regretted being obliged to leave them; that I considered them all remarkably "gentil" (to be consistent in my discourse); then expressed my feelings in one farewell halloo, that should have touched the heart of a British hound, equal to any Gallic cheer; and deaf, indeed, were the ears that heard it not. I now entered a large tract of oats, in sheaf, that lay before me; thence I crossed another finely-wooded hollow, and came upon the small village of Saint Vigor, where I proposed to refresh and halt, not having done so in the least for fully sixteen miles. The wretchedness of the fare and accommodation was only equalled by the extreme civility of the poor woman who kept the cabaret. "She was so very

sorry! — if I had only come yesterday, — or would stay till to-morrow, — it was terribly malheureux." My walk had given me the appetite of a wolf, making me quite independent of oysters or bitters to provoke one, à la Français: — it was provoking enough to find the butter salt, the bread sour, and the potatoes suffering from the prevailing epidemic. With such a "carte," the bed, in perspective, had not the most promising aspect, which was speedily realised by the good woman telling me that *that* was quite out of her power to arrange, as three persons usually slumbered in the only one in the house, which was not of the largest, though, I venture to say, not the least lively in the department. The poor civil creature walked part of the way to put me in the right route for Saint Romain, where my only chance of a dormitory lay; and I willingly overlooked the roughness of the fare in the earnest attempt to please I saw so apparent from the first.

The lanes were narrow, with oaks shooting as straight as poplars high above my head on each side, making the declining day hasten rapidly to a close,— which I soon saw, indeed, was going to "leave the world to darkness and to me." One of the very picturesque-looking glens by day-light had quite a different aspect as I crossed it in the dark, stumbling over felled timber, and ruminating upon the charms of a hair mattress. At length I fairly "lost myself" (an event open to congratulation you will say); how-

ever that may be, I was completely at fault, and then did the wisest thing I could in my position, namely, to sit down and not make it worse. I presently heard the "watch-dog's honest bark" at some half-mile's distance, with the rumbling of a cart at an equal one on the "other tack." I instantly decided on the cart, making straight for the sound; but after walking to the very point, as I imagined, all was still as death, — the elfin cart and horses, with their goblin driver, had all fled or vanished, without making any sign to me. Yet still the friendly cur kept baying the moon (for *not* shining I suppose), and was an excellent landmark for information. After crossing a large field of stubble, a deep lane, and an orchard, I came upon a lonely house, at the door of which I knocked with modest firmness. A man appeared, with a candle held high above his head, displaying any thing but an encouraging countenance, and, to my most bland and eloquent request to be informed where the town of Saint Romain might be situated, answered with that abrupt, hateful, discordant French contra query, "Comment?" Nothing can equal this villainous word, uttered as it is upon all occasions, often when perfectly unnecessary, with the vilest accent laid upon the latter syllable. Whereupon I had again to solicit information as to the locality of Saint Romain. But for the darkness of the night, I felt vastly tempted to "beg the loan of his gridiron" into the bargain, in return for his "comment."

This time I made him comprehend the extent of my wishes; and after another hour's walk, I at length found myself in the "Grand Hotel," du nom de Jésus, "tenu par Madame Thomasse, *Saint* Romain." The Pope himself could not have been lodged in greater holiness than all this promised; and might have safely indulged in an extra bottle under a sign of so much *sanctity!* But I was far too glad to throw off my knapsack, and enter my chamber with as little delay as possible, being as completely fatigued with the twenty miles I had passed over as I ever remember to have felt. This is always the case on the first day in riding or walking, and a happy thing we improve with the work. I was so completely tired that I could not sleep; and though I reasoned and argued upon the nonsense of remaining awake, though I repeated verses, and counted till I forgot the figure, lay still and tossed over alternately; all was of no avail; I believe I did not really accomplish a doze. These are horrid nights indeed; and right glad was I when I saw the sun shining through the window, to put an end to the torture I had suffered.

I soon got under way for Tankarville; taking the high road for a mile or two, then crossing over quite a park, of different produce, wooded at intervals, with cattle piquetted amongst the clover, each with his portion allotted for the day. You descend upon the village of Tankarville by a rural lane, and find the scenery in every way worthy the magnificent

ruin that so completely commands it. It is truly the relic of a most perfect baronial château, or rather castle; for its size, strength, and importance were once inferior to none.

The original building (to which a comparatively modern château has been added, now long since also a ruin,) appears to be of a very remote age, and formerly the "hold" of a very powerful family. There are the remains of a chapel, showing proof of its exquisite finish; a salle de justice; several prisons, in one of which I saw the date of 1391, scratched by some unfortunate wretch, along with his name, and cruel fate. The donjon keep, with walls of immense strength, and beautifully groined roof, with many other large apartments, are still in being—over the windows of several were emblazoned numerous coats of arms in fresco.

The view from the Eagle's Tower is exceedingly fine, comprising the river, cliffs, and surrounding country, from a height of six hundred feet. In this tower the archives and treasure were kept,—well indeed selected, for it seems as solid and enduring as the rock on which it is founded. This was the Norman cradle of our earls of Tankarville, and a most noble home it was.

It is impossible to conceive any thing finer than the view of the château, and its immediate scenery, as you approach the first bluff in the cliffs, after leaving it behind you. The castle is imbedded in a

forest of oaks, growing luxuriantly at an altitude of three hundred feet. On one side is a deep glen and valley, with the broad sweep of the Seine, and town of Quillebœuf, "en face." The few old-fashioned wood and plaster cottages at its foot are in perfect keeping with the white beetling crags bordering the river. The whole forms a coup-d'œil in scenic grandeur seldom surpassed.

The walk by the Seine to Lillebonne from Tankarville is by the side of, and in places under, the overhanging cliffs, so high and towering as to be well worthy the noble stream that flows so majestically beneath them. They are wooded to the base, and compose a shrubbery of the "sweet old lady's" planting, of the greatest possible variety. I noticed the oak, the yew, the hazel, sycamore, and ash — these festooned again by ivy, honeysuckle, the Virginia creeper, with hops in great luxuriance. I saw the holly, walnut, thorn, cherry, crab, privet, elderberry, and purple beech, with wild flowers in countless specimens.

About a league from Lillebonne, the route mounts the hill, and takes you through the same variety of foliage. There are thatched cottages here and there, plunged in the woods, where the space is large enough for the small farmstead and few apple-trees. Occasionally you get glimpses of the Seine, now at a considerable distance on your right; and beyond the river, the opposite hills. The little hamlet of Le

Mesnil, with its half dozen houses and pretty church scattered on the brow of the wooded hill, brings you within half a mile of Lillebonne, which I see is most romantically situated, with every promise for to-morrow.

The walk and scenery I have thus described, made me more convinced than ever how goodly a world it is, if we only know how to enjoy it; and that there are days (ay, moments) in our existence that balance years of disappointment or discontent.

There are the "ecstacies" of life, that enchant all the different senses beyond expression, according to our separate tastes. *Mine* (with the most devoted love of nature and her works) are to *hear* Persiani sing, an anthem to the organ, or the overture to Don Giovanni. To *see* a sunset from "Brada Head;" the sea breaking against a rocky coast; a pretty woman in a riding habit; Fanny Elssler; or, above all, the face of some long-lost, valued friend! — these are delights, indeed, that quicken the pulse, put care to flight, and refresh the very heart of man. But as most unpoetically, yet truly, he likewise requires a little corporeal reviving at times, particularly after a seventeen miles' walk, I find I must close my eyes and pleasures for the day, wishing you, as I do, "a fair good night."

LETTER XVII.

LILLEBONNE. — ANTIQUITIES. — ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE. — CHÂTEAU D'HARCOURT. — THE VIEW FROM THE KEEP. — THE ROUTE ROYALE. — CONTRAST WITH THE CALAIS ROAD. — INDIFFERENCE OF ENGLISH TOURISTS. — VIEW ABOVE CAUDEBEC. — MAGNIFICENT CHURCH. — L'AIGLE D'OR. — PLACE DE L'ORME. — RUE DES BELLES FEMMES. — NAPOLEON AND JOSEPHINE. — WRETCHED SCULPTURE. — CATHOLICISM. — WET MORNING. — WALK TO LA MAILLERAYE. — GOOD AFTERNOON.

Caudebec, Sept. 1845.

ANOTHER delicious morning, after a steeping rain during the night, found me afoot betimes, perfectly refreshed, and fit for action. No top that *I* ever saw slumber under the most indefatigable flagellation, could have competed with me in the way I made up for the broken night at Saint Romain. I had got into good quarters, with every civility and attention, at Lillebonne, and came out "quite a new man." The little town is very beautifully situated, and full of antiquities. A Roman amphitheatre of the largest size, showing the arena, seats for spectators, with all its original extent, is preserved most carefully by the authorities. Nearly opposite are the ruins of the château d'Harcourt, from whence the present English family of that name originally sprung; they

being a branch of the old Norman tree, and proud may they well be of the beauties in which its root was planted.

The view from the keep of the castle, a round tower of enormous strength, and deeply moated, is unrivalled in its peculiar aspect. It is placed in a complete circle of wooded hills, green, swelling, and harmonious to a degree, without one rugged feature. The first breath of autumn had touched the luxuriant foliage with a gentle, mellow tint, and greatly increased its beauty.

Immediately below the château is the town of Lillebonne, with its pretty church, built of the white stone of the neighbourhood, with the Roman amphitheatre in the midst. The only opening to this hilly basin is to the south, where, across a verdant flat of meadows, you see the broad and placid Seine glistening in the sun, the extreme view being completed by the high and distant hills that meet the waters on the other shore. There are villas, lanes, and gardens, with fields of various produce, lying at your feet. The beauties of this splendid picture must indeed be seen to be understood.

Whilst staying at Havre I have seen thousands of English, hurrying like a tornado to Paris by the quickest possible route,—if in the dark, so much the better, — leaving the road I have travelled so far, unsought, unseen,—one it is impossible to conceive more worthy of at least a week's undivided relish.

Those who take the Calais road (and many never change it, though steered entirely by their own inclination), have no notion of the transcendent beauties of the route they avoid, for the most dreary, uninteresting one in the whole world, simply that they may be a few hours sooner in the crowd.

The road (one after M'Adam's own heart in finish and material), ascends from Lillebonne, and conducts you through the same vast, highly cultivated, undulating park in tillage I passed through yesterday, but probably more picturesque in its features, and may well be called, without vanity, "La Belle." You pass a few cottages on the road side, till you are met by a glimpse of the Seine again, with a large tract of forest stretching to the north. The road then debouches upon Caudebec, with, Heavens!—what a view! It is in vain to attempt a description.

To the left are the hills, covered with foliage, forming a sylvan, undulating half circle. To the right, five hundred feet below the road, is the river, flowing in its most serpentine, tranquil, exquisite proportions. Kissing its very margin is a vast plain of rich swarth, delightfully green, and intersected by rows and clumps of willow, oak, and poplar, planted in inimitable grace. Far beyond is the deeply wooded horizon, joining the slowly driving clouds — without a sound to disturb the matchless scene. Hungry as I was, I sat devouring the glorious prospect; it was indeed in ecstacy I gazed, for

full an hour. I descended to the little town, through a hanging wood, the first object meeting my eye being the richly ornamented church and spire, the most elaborate in its finish, I believe, of any in the country. It is another relic of our handiwork, when in possession of it; and certainly is no disgrace to our architectural abilities at that or any other period. I entered the beautiful porch, even before looking for quarters, and, as usual in France, was greatly disappointed in the interior. With the exception of a finely carved font in black oak, and a most wretched attempt at sculpture (it would be impossible for me to describe), there is nothing but the accustomed prints and artificial flowers, never forgetting the tallow candles. The exterior is magnificent, saving a villanous, insignificant spire, or shabby minaret, crooked and patched, though I fancy a modern innovation, surmounted by a gilt weathercock! This abomination (about the shape, but without the beauty of a large parsnip) is reared, I could almost fancy, as a foil, near the most superb turreted spire I ever beheld. It is in the shape of an elongated crown, terminating in a pommel, and full of sharp pointed workmanship.

I now bethought me of the creature comforts, that even artificial flowers, carved fonts, and beautiful scenery could never yet satisfactorily account for. I found the "Aigle d'Or" all that could be desired in smelts and cutlets, with a bed room

facing the Seine, all placed, most pleasingly to the association, in the "Place de l'Orme." Then came the soft delicious languor of content, after exercise —a stroll on the little quai, a promenade through the "Rue des belles Femmes,"—where I *really* saw two of the fair sponsors to the street, or their descendants,—my taper,—the quire of paper,—one sheet of which I again dévote to you, and lastly, let me hope, repose.

Tuesday Morning.

The hills are covered with a grey misty veil this morning, denoting rain. The river has put on a frown since yesterday; its surface is in deep shade, in lieu of the glittering face it wore so lately. The landscape is completely changed; but is equally interesting still, as a lesson in Nature's physiognomy.

This is my fourth day "à pied," and I find myself even fresher than when I started. I intend crossing the Seine and looking at the opposite bank and country, after I have breakfasted at the "Aigle d'Or." In my lodging room here there are several prints, representing some of the principal events in the life of Napoleon. One of them, executed and handed to posterity, I should imagine, by any one but a *friend* of the late emperor, is a scene between himself and poor Josephine. He has just told her of his resolve to be divorced (it is explained at the foot of the engraving in heartless

minuteness). Buonaparte appears to be standing with one hand opening the door, the other holding a candle, in quite a theatrical attitude, leaving the true-hearted, thoroughly womanly victim to his ambition fainting on the floor. He richly deserved all his reverses, and infinitely more, for deserting that sincere kind-hearted creature, who is pourtrayed stricken at his feet, whilst his features are drawn without one touch of feeling.

The rain is now falling in a regular soaking shower, without any appearance of abatement: I shall therefore probably remain here quietly and await the coming day.

Caudebec is a little, quaint, old-fashioned place, surrounded by hills, facing the beautiful Seine, with a clear stream running through the midst of it. The church is the main object of attraction, and there I shall go to ruminate, and make my observations. The sculpture I alluded to yesterday comprises half a dozen figures, larger than life, surrounding the body of the Saviour, after he is taken from the cross. The only merit is in the rich sarcophagus in which he is lying. The limbs of all the figures are put on without the least regard to anatomical rules, while there is a truly comical expression in feature and attitude that leaves any thing but a serious impression on the beholder. They are evidently Monsieurs, Mesdames, and Mademoiselles in stone, in earnest *conversation*, with manners ready for a café, or a pro-

menade of the present day. One old gentleman, with a beard, holding his helmet gracefully in his hand, is bowing and explaining something to a lady adorned in a becoming cap, with intense politeness.

There are "bits of bone," and other tiny relics, labelled as once the exfoliated particles or chattels of various saints, inclosed with much gilt paper in a vile gaudy box, covered with glass. In the centre is a *penny* print of some departed worthy. One is labelled as "Saint Louis," a hero attired in a blue cloak, with ermine collar, and pantaloons to match! he only wants a cigar and poodle to be in perfect keeping.

I would willingly walk to Havre in one day from this place, if any remark of mine, proceeding from the *fact*, could add one iota to the *just* contempt these things merit from every truly religious and thinking mind. It is a matter of grave surprise that such materials for a faith, with its other adjuncts, can stand the light of day in this age of inquiry and practical common sense. It is only a proof, if any were wanting, that wilful darkness is its keystone, otherwise Monsieur Louis, and the other *saintly commissionaires*, would cease to be employed. Miracles, bits of bone, with other human relics and "nick-nacks," would give place to "the still small voice," and calm reflection. Then men would *know* in their hearts that neither religion nor reason dwelt in them. To accomplish this would be

a "miracle" indeed, and one of which the future worker may well be proud.

About noon I found I had exhausted Caudebec, or rather drained its small cup to "the dregs" I saw running down every gutter to the Seine. I therefore started in the rain, in preference to gazing at it dropping on the few longest legged fowls I ever saw, that were standing before the window, victims to hydropathy. My "sweet old friend" was in tears all the way to La Mailleraye, though they did not disfigure her comely features.

The road, with its sound bottom, was good travelling, having the river on the right, and the wooded dripping hills on the other hand; so I hoisted my umbrella, and made comparatively fair weather of it. You leave the Rouen road opposite the château, and are ferried over the Seine for a couple of sous to the "Hotel de la Place Victoire," if you will. I gladly entered mine host's victorious abode, changed my shoes and stockings, and was quickly at work, "blowing up" the fire, instead of the waiters, in a little salon close to the water, whilst Madame was preparing my dinner. I crossed the terrace before the château of "La Mailleraye," as I walked to the inn, and should think it is quite fifteen hundred feet in length, with a stone balustrade facing the gardens and windows.

This, with the trees cut like a hedge, at least fifty feet high, with avenues at intervals, are all the out-

side peculiarities of this famous place: whether they are worthy the name of beauties is a matter of taste, and, *I* think, question. The château itself is in a mean ordinary style of architecture.

I hope to be more agreeably surprised with the interior in the morning, for it is raining at present in such a determined manner, that stirring out is not to be thought of, causing some little need of the "old banker's assistance" again. I am thankful there is no "commis-voyageur" or other creature in the house, or at all events where I am. I shall write up my log (wherein I have always a pleasing resource), blow up the fire again, and, as I have only walked about five miles to-day, shall contrive to be as restless as possible till bed time; when in the morning I hope to see the château, and take a look at this side of the river; but I see very plainly I have had the *cream* off my excursion; here the scenery is tamer, "more poplar'd," and any thing but like my ramble of yesterday. And so it should be, for if all days were alike, my "ecstatic theory" and reminiscence would be lost.

We must have a contrast occasionally to teach us to value the "good things" of this life as they deserve. Which being the case, I hope you will put a proper estimation upon my attempt to scribble to you, with barely sufficient light to enable me to distinguish between the inkstand and glass of vin

ordinaire on the table, permitting me to close the one and swallow the other, if I can contrive to do so, without making a mistake.

Whichever comes first, I take it to your good health, and say "good afternoon."

LETTER XVIII.

LA MAILLERAYE. — THE CHÂTEAU. — THE AVENUES. — ANCIENT CHAPEL. — "EQUALITY." — THE FAMILY OF MORTEMART. — MONTMORENCY. — HARCOURT. — ROHAN CHABOT, AND THIEBAULT. — ANCIENT LINEAGE. — "THE OLD RÉGIME." — ROAD TO JUMIEGE. — THE FOREST. — THE FERRY BOAT. — THE RUIN. — ROUTE TO CAUDEBEC. — WALK TO LILLEBONNE. — GOOD QUARTERS. — ROAD TO BOLBEC. — THE VALLEY. — WALK TO MONTEVILLIERS, HARFLEUR, AND HAVRE. — RETROSPECT OF THE EXCURSION. — THE ADVANTAGES OF PEDESTRIANISM IN SEEING A COUNTRY.

Bolbec, Sept. 1845.

THE window of my lodging room in the little inn of La Mailleraye met the first rays of the sun as they streamed over the wooded horizon and fair river immediately below, giving me the welcome intelligence of a brilliant morning, after the steeping rain of the preceding evening. I quickly prepared myself for the château and walk to Jumiege, intending to take the steamer at the latter place for Havre. The avenues at La Mailleraye, on a nearer approach, are certainly as fine as avenues can possibly be, being of ample length and width, with an altitude of quite a hundred feet: there are eight of them, planted in a semicircle, down which you have quite a kaleidoscope

kind of view. The château is moated, and of considerable strength originally, with an interior highly respectable in its appointments, with nothing more to boast of. The library is well filled, and "speaks volumes" for the acquirements of the present proprietor and his predecessors. Altogether there is a great formality about the place and its arrangements, very destructive to the picturesque, but as they have withstood the attacks of upwards of three hundred years, they may well escape any criticism of mine.

There is a country far more beautifully laid out by the superior taste of nature, at the back of the grounds, stretching to the forest, with great variety in its features, and evidently well cultivated.

I was much pleased, or rather interested, in the small ancient chapel belonging to the family, situated within the pleasaunce. It is fitted up with antique carvings in oak, and so far in excellent keeping with the old, long ennobled names of "Montemart," "Thiebault," "Rohan Chabot," "Harcourt," and "Montmorency," whose monuments are graciously permitted to remain, after having assumed the modern almost humble style of tombstone handiwork.

All the old escutcheons and heraldic symbols of the family that once chronicled their ancient lineage, "the forty quarterings," and "mailed crusader," became a prey to the "playful children" in their revolutionary pastime — every thing being either mutilated or entirely obliterated. How horrible to con-

template the depravity of taste that could so recklessly destroy such relics of antiquity, even in the vain attempt to carry out the false and untenable doctrine of "equality," that then became the fashionable mania of the day.

The very word itself is nonsense. The poor and the madhouse prove it fabulous! Men were never *intended* to be equal. The mind laughs the idea to scorn of "*intellect* in rank and file!" *She claims* and grasps *her* share of the revolving wealth and honours of the world, whilst fortune *allots the rest* to *few* indeed, proving there is, and *can* be, *no equality.* That there will always be men who despise and hate gentle birth in others (the consequence of the luck or intellect of their predecessors), having no such honours to boast themselves, is doubtless true; but here envy moves the hatred, and cannot advance the selfish doctrine.

Waiving the utter impossibility of all being "minnows or goodly five pound trout," in the rapid, bubbling stream of life, the logic itself is bad that would divest the heirloom of a man's family name and honourable career of a jot of its proper value. Herein lies, at all events, a double incentive to be careful of his own, so to act as not to tarnish or disgrace the memory of those who have gone before him. And should he be "to fortune and to fame unknown" in his own and predecessors' persons, he

has an equal motive to strive to build and hand them to those he loves better than himself, sweetening thereby the very bitterness of death, in the honest pride and gratification. Messieurs the despisers of these trifles plume themselves upon nothing being whispered *against* their ancestral purity, for the simple reason that neither they themselves, nor any body else, know the least particulars concerning their illustrious forefathers, or even where they lived or were buried. The Yankees of this extensive faction selected Mr. Polk to contest the Presidency on these favourable grounds, defying the usual electioneering abuse to be showered on *him*, because not a soul in the States had ever heard his name mentioned.

If a man is modestly proud of the character of his ancestry, and careful of their good fame in his own person, I have yet to learn that having had a great grandfather can be a disadvantage; if, on the contrary, he makes the circumstance of too great consideration, he is truly like a turnip, "the best part of him being under ground." However, the noble family of Mortemart appears to have been allied to all the ancient names I have mentioned, and once comparatively lords of the majestic Seine, along with the house of Tankarville, having possessed Orcher, Bevilliers, and La Mailleraye, for many centuries, and now holding them, at the present day, in direct descent.

The marchioness, or "madame" (as all term the amiable, high-born lady) was at the château when I visited it, and politely ordered the head domestic (an old man with quite a distinguished air) to point out every thing worth seeing.

The gardens, stables, chase, and numerous stately avenues, bring the France of "other days" vividly before you, when the cultivated, high-bred families of the "old régime," flourished in the land, and not afraid to own their pedigree, or obliged to claim the "bar sinister" with their friendly blacksmith, in order to save their lives.

What umbrage these ancient people may have originally given to their unshaved neighbours I do not exactly know, and I dare say I should be safe in adding, "nor they themselves." But, whatever it was, it proved the most complete downfal to all the aristocracy of France. The besom swept away the herald's office, and sabots tramped where high-heeled shoes had once so lightly trod.

Whether the change has really been of service to the country has yet, in my opinion, to be seen, the *harvest being far from garnered.* That it has removed a graceful, polished, courtly school of manners from the world, there can be no doubt; leaving one, in its stead, that may or may not be preferable, according to the taste; but, I do most confidently assert, there is a petty, touchy, jealous, and petulant feeling in the country, that was quite unknown in the days of

"soap" and La Mailleraye. The higher classes were too well bred, and conscious of their position, to be ridiculously susceptible. Their conversation was on other subjects, from which the masses took their tone; both were then free from the most vulgar of all vulgarities, viz. a half gratified belief in imaginary offence.

The road to Jumiège, after leaving La Mailleraye, was by a rural lane, leading through a fine farming country to the forest, through whose dense shadows I walked for four or five miles: it was a perfect, gloomy, forest promenade indeed — silence and solitude reigned throughout.

I descended to the river again, by a route that appeared to be the bed of a mountain torrent in winter, and crossed over to Jumiège with some farmers and their steeds; one of the latter, when nearly half across, plunged over the boat's side, without the least warning, and, after nearly capsizing us all, took the stream most gallantly, and quite as independently as if he had had a letter of marque on board.

The Norman Charon gave me the pleasing information, that no steamer was expected that day, there being a scarcity of water. I therefore made the best of it, by looking at the magnificent remains of the monastery at my leisure. They are quite a minster, of the largest size, in ruin; and seem to have been, at one time, gorgeously decorated in the inte-

rior, by both sculpture and painting; specimens of each being in profusion. There are three towers, of upwards of a hundred feet in height, from which the view is very grand over the river, hills, and surrounding country. After leaving Jumiège, I walked once more to Caudebec, by a splendid road surrounded by great variety in scenery.

The hills fall back part of the way, leaving space for different kinds of produce, that grows, without the slightest fence, within an inch of the very road: all is in great neatness, without the least loss of ground to be noticed any where.

The Aigle d'Or was still in the Place de l'Orme, where I gladly threw myself into a seat, my shoes off my feet, and my bones into bed, as speedily after a hasty and late meal as you can well imagine: all three feats being rendered pleasing in the extreme, after the long and very beautiful ramble I had so greatly enjoyed. The next morning by times I walked to the hill above Caudebec, to revel once more in the incomparable beauties of the view; proposing to take a seat in the diligence to Havre when it passed. I was rather pleased than otherwise to find every place occupied, from the coupé to the banquette, with nothing before me but the excellent road I had travelled before from Lillebonne, or to return to Caudebec. I instantly pointed my head to the former town, crossing the beautiful park-like district a second time, which I think must fully ex-

ceed fifty miles in circumference, in this particular feature. I had, therefore, the advantage of seeing it on both tacks, and was certainly delighted with the walk. I dined at Lillebonne, and can safely affirm the excellence of the fare was only equalled by the civility and comeliness of the landlady; both of which, to be fully appreciated, must be seen and relished after a walk from Caudebec.

Another diligence from Rouen changed horses before the windows, but was equally filled, to my utter exclusion — not a place for an infant. I therefore took a new route to Bolbec, every inch of which is perfectly charming. You walk through a fine valley, surrounded by wood, a great part of it being the highly cultivated grass farm of a French gentleman, whose attention is much given to breeding and feeding cattle of a superior description. The land seemed as good as possible, the scenery was highly picturesque; and, after a walk of near upon twenty miles, I have still courage left in my eyelids to scribble this to you before I "turn in," and say good night.

Friday Morning.

I got a glimpse of a "long chimney," with its sable canopy, from my window at Bolbec, and resolved upon an immediate retreat. The town itself is far from tempting in either its appearance or accommodation, though the country around is lovely in

the extreme. From the hill above the place you have a most brilliant prospect, which accompanies you all the way indeed to Montevilliers and Ingouville. I trudged away as far as Harfleur, feeling an honest pride in refusing every overture from the passing wheels, having gone so far without their aid, and entered my quarters in the Place Louis Seize, at Havre, after eight days passed in as delightful a ramble as it is possible to conceive, in this most beautiful world. I travelled over the best roads I certainly ever saw in my life. The weather was in perfect harmony with the delicious scenery, making every thing doubly pleasing. September is occasionally a happy union of the three first seasons,—cool as the early spring, warm enough to be called summer at mid-day, with the bracing freshness of autumn in the evening breeze. This has been precisely the case during my tour,—one I shall ever think of with the relish of a pedestrian. Surely this mode of mingling with the world, in its twinings, villages, and half-hidden corners, must be more instructive than hurrying through a country at a rate of twenty miles an hour? By my plan you see a people in their natural garb and original peculiarities, and can form your opinion accordingly. Where the "current" sets, you may depend upon it the mind and manners, whether in Grand Cairo or in Cheapside, are based upon "profit and loss." There is little difference, when you look fairly into them, excepting in

the turban and gossamer; but in the out-of-the-way rural districts there is a constant page of the old lady's manuscript to be met with, in which information, amusement, and originality are combined.

Isaac Taylor says, "These are the great teachers of common sense; and whoever, by either elevation of rank or peculiarity of habits, lives far removed from this kind of tuition, never makes much proficiency in that excellent quality of the intellect. A man who has little or nothing to do with other men on terms of open and free equality, needs the native sense of *five*, to behave himself with only a fair average of propriety."

I hope to be able to prove to you, some day, how much better behaved I am from the late tuition I have received at the hands of my "kind-hearted, amiable old friend and schoolmistress;" whose lessons I have such pleasure in retaining, by means of the "exercise" she so strongly recommends to both mind and body in her healthy, delightful theory.

LETTER XIX.

REMINISCENCE OF ENGLAND. — THE GERMAN OCEAN. — FILEY BAY. — THE VILLAGE GIRLS AND FISHERMEN. — A SEA VIEW. — FLAMBRO' CLIFFS. — THE COUNTRY ON THE EAST COAST. — THE VILLAGE AND MANOR HOUSE. — THE HARVEST. — THE FARMER. — THE OLD BROOD MARE. — YOUNG BLOOD STOCK. — THE BEAUTY OF THE HORSE. — JOB'S DESCRIPTION OF HIM. — THE HUNTER. — HIS LOVE OF THE CHASE. — OXEN AND FAT WETHERS. — THE FARM HOUSE. — "THE FREEDOM OF THE PLACE." — DREAMS. — ENGLISH FARMERS. — THE KEEPER. — THE LATE SQUIRE. — THE BREED NEARLY LOST! — THE GATEWAY. — THE ENTRANCE HALL. — THE DAYS OF YORE.

As I went marching along through the bye-lanes and over the country bordering the beautiful Seine, on the last day of my late excursion, I was once more overcome by the dreamy, pleasing spirit of retrospect. My mind's eye wandered over the Channel to the white cliffs and shores of England, and roved in fancy over one or two scenes I know and love so well.

Imagination landed me on a reef of honeycombed, storm-beaten rocks, that runs far into the German ocean. I saw the brown-cheeked, bright-eyed, saucy village girls, with their short red petticoats showing their well-turned ankles, sure-footed as a mountain

goat, gathering the bait for the hardy, industrious men, who face the sea and its perils in all weathers. These I saw, in their heavy boots, hauling up their cobles over the fine, level, unequalled beach, as I mounted the steep ascent that led to the little town.

I gazed with the delight of long, long acquaintance, on the beautiful bay below. Far to the right stretched the white cliffs and rocks of Flambro': under their rugged, towering lee, a large fleet of colliers bound to the south'ard were brought up, waiting for a change of wind.

Innumerable light craft, with the wind abeam, were spanking along "hand over hand" to the north'ard, with a large Scotch steamer in the midst, leaving a canopy of smoke in the heavens nearly the length of the Dogger Bank. Far to seaward, a revenue cutter was signalising the coast guard, who had previously demanded her number.

Numerous luggers and yawls engaged in the herring fishery were riding within the reef, in "smooth water." The accompaniment to this living panorama was composed of the sighs of the sweet south-west gale, and the fall of the waves upon the glittering shingle. I reluctantly turned my steps inland, though the country is one that would leave you little cause to complain in its features. It cannot, perhaps, boast of the transcendent beauty of the brunettes and blondes I have before attempted to describe. It is not fair or reasonable to expect such "houris" of

the woods and fields at every turn as these; but if you love a clean, homely, tidy maid, with a clear complexion, a mouth lost in dimples, with a breath like new mown hay, the country round the bay I have left is her very counterpart. Turnpike roads there are not, the lanes are narrow, and covered with the white and shining pebbles from the sea. Stiles will conduct you over the greenest undulating fields to the pretty village, where the ancient manor house is seen amongst the trees. Every thing is rural in the extreme, with peace and quietness in the very air. This ever was and *is my* future "El Dorado." I prefer it to any part of our beautiful island; it beats with a manly, farming, sporting pulse; is far removed from the *charm* of every manufacturing town, is near the glorious sea, and has a fine, bracing atmosphere, in which I was always hearty.

I found the harvest in full career; every thing was plenteous and smiling. I met teams conveying heavy loads of wheat to the stack yard; the plough lads whistling right merrily as they drove them, accompanied by the wail of the plover and song of the thrush. I saw the jolly farmer, my old and well-known friend, riding through his fields and making for home: I too gladly accepted his hearty invitation to walk over his farm, and pass the night at his hospitable abode. He was famous for his breed of horses, and boasted, not unjustly, of their prowess in the field, after leaving the farm that bred them.

One old mare, with a pedigree longer than any Welchman's, but with power, bone, and perfect symmetry combined, was grazing in the first field we entered. She had a foal at her foot at the time, and instantly came towards us in the graceful, easy step of thorough breeding. She was quite "en deshabille;" you could just see the bright intelligent eye, beaming through the mazes of her flowing mane; her ample tail swept the green turf as does the train of some courtly beauty. She came for her usual caresses, and received them.

Dearly the farmer loved his mare — her picture hung over his cheerful hearth, that he might see her in the hour of his repose, and point out all her beauty to his friends.

What an angelic creature is a young horse, with breeding in his veins! what grace in every action, — what beauty in his eye, as he moves over the turf in all the unbroken freedom of his nature. How he snorts and paws the ground, then joins his comrades in a whirl of lightning speed. They gallop round the large pasture in a drove, rush like a torrent through the narrow hand-gate, wheel sharp amongst the trees of the plantation where they retreat in the heat of day, and are far too sagacious to graze a hair. Fanny Ellsler is not more graceful in her steps than the young colts and fillies in their careless pastime. How affectionate they appear to each other, and how docile at the word of man.

The beauty and nobility of the horse have been sung, from the remotest ages, in language the most perfect it is possible to utter in praise of any thing less than divine. He is described both by Homer and Virgil, when in the battle and stemming the flood. The latter says, in conclusion, —

> "He neighs, he snorts, he lifts his head on high,
> Before his ample chest the frothy waters fly."

But more supremely beautiful than all is the song of Job in his praise: he says, —

"He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth out to meet the armed men."

Again: —

"He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage.
"He saith among the trumpets, Ha! ha! He smelleth the battle afar off; the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

In our own time, see him in the chase,—how his heart and soul (for he *has* one) are there! How impatient he is for the fray! — when *your* ears are useless, *his* prick up with intelligence — he darts his eagle eye far into the distant country, when (though unknown to you) he hears the hounds he so dearly loves! How his eye gleams at the sight of a scarlet coat, transient as is the glance, in passing through the dark glade. See him superannuated, and grazing quietly in the paddock allotted him for life by his grateful master; how his old blood warms at the cherished sounds of his youth, — as the pack open

within earshot; if within a field or two, the temptation is too great to be withstood; in vain post, and rail, or strong plashed fence, interpose—the love of the chase infuses a new life—he clears them all, and hurries to the field!

If you like a "crop" of juicy marbled beef, with lares of fat and lean laid on as aldermen love to eat and Giblet delights to sell, throw your eye over any one of the score of fine large Holderness oxen that we find in the next field we enter of our friend's right-well-managed, thriving farm. What sleek, fine-skinned, short-legged animals they appear! "every one a grazer"—their dewlaps hanging to the ground, and "beef" any time they're wanted.

Here are a flock of wethers of Sir Tatton's famous breed, with saddles, each of which would carry a man, his wife, and eight goodly youngsters, all blessed with appetites of proof. What backs and legs! with (the daintiest joint of *all*) *necks* short and fat, with heads more like snakes than sheep.

Pass we through the farm and yard, and open the gate of the farmer's garden, intended "for parlour, for pleasure, for kitchen, and all." Rows of laurel and laurustina above a century old, lead by a soft and well-mown grassy path, fenced by espaliers of Ribston's famous pippins, to the large, red brick, comfortable dwelling. From the bow-windows, nearly hid by monthly roses, you see the white gates and well-clipped hedges of the farm, "the fifty-acre"

field of swarth lying straight before them, and far away the distant wolds.

Now comes the "freedom of the place," presented to you in shape of a smoking round of beef, with turnips mashed in cream. The foaming home-brewed ale, with wine-sour plums, and apricots in tarts and glasses, with such sweets as a farmer's wife only knows how to offer, finish your repast. Wine, both red and white, with various "grogs" to suit your palate or inclination, quickly make their appearance on the table. You go to "stables" (for your host sees hounds generally three days a-week), take an early cup of tea, when you retire to your chamber, the floor of which is waxed and brushed equal to a mirror: here, in sheets smelling of lavender, you consign your limbs and senses to sweet and sound repose.

The sun has scarcely cleared the waters of the bay before he streams through your window, quickly putting to flight the happy dream, of which you had *re*-caught the thread so vividly that you can hardly believe it the tantalising creation of the brain. Does it not seem cruel in dreams to rack the mind of man when all his other senses are at rest, as if his daily disappointments were not sufficiently severe, without his slumbers being disturbed by hideous phantoms, hair-breadth escapes, or a violent death that shake the very soul; or, worse than this, dear absent faces smile upon him — the very words and

looks are life itself; delicious, long hoped-for scenes are opened to his view, with imaginary untold wealth, a vision the first opening of an eyelid puts to flight, and leaves him — to shave, in sad and drear reality?

However, the farmer's jolly face and plenteous breakfast are any amount of human consolation: it is almost impossible to be otherwise than gay. How I love these kind and hearty fellows, their genuine, never-tiring hospitality, their simple minds, and moderate desires. Long may they live and flourish on the soil they so well know how to till and honour to the core!

What exquisite delight the memory feels as she occasionally refreshes herself on the long past, simple pleasures of our earliest youth. Even when the all-absorbing, far more gay and fascinating scenes of life are before our eyes, how vividly these former days pass before us in the visionary, soothing tableau of the mind.

The genuine, farming, healthy country I have here attempted to describe, has nearly all my earliest recollection; in it were my first important exploits, even to the razor, as well as incessant rambles amongst its truly hospitable people, one of whose houses I have only given you as a sample of the whole.

I can now see in my mind's eye every sunny bank and copse, every minute feature in this sylvan district, even to a particular hedge or stile, though I have not in reality beheld them for many, many

years. How strange it is such trifles should cling to our recollection, when many a brilliant gathering of the world, or thrilling momentary pageant, is all but forgotten or obliterated. These rural, long past, harmless scenes of youth, will assuredly be our mental guests, when the gorgeous ballet, the Champs Elysées, or "review by emperors" have faded into Lethe — and as surely bring us comfort in the renewed companionship.

For the present, return we to the farm in rich and sporting Holderness. I found my old friend "the keeper" from the Hall, in the garden, and walked with him across the fine old fields of swarth to the ancient manor house, of which he was nearly lord and master in authority, the last veritable one having been just carried to the little rustic church, where lay the bones of his long uninterrupted line of ancestry, leaving the splendid estate to a far distant heir in entail, whom he probably had never seen.

The late squire was a hearty, natural fellow, perfectly well bred, as became his birth and education, with manners based upon an innate kindness of disposition and true benevolence of heart. Such a foundation *alone* makes "the *true* gentleman" — (though not according to the modern ingredients), for in it rests (as do coins of purest gold in the stony corners of our greatest buildings) the desire to please and gratify, to soothe and comfort, all he comes in contact with; polish *will* accompany these feelings;

they are your only safety from offence or hauteur, and are as solid as the virtue from which they spring. How few of these links in British society now remain; the chain seems broken, and the very material lost; so artificial, so acutely sensitive, so heartless is the world become, even in the country, with few, very few exceptions.

To such men as these pride *should* be useless: they have all that man can boast, and, consequently, not the least occasion for such hateful apparel as pretence..

My squire wore no such unbecoming garb; he was as simple-hearted as he was properly dignified; was courtly enough to address or entertain the Queen, and had urbanity *from the heart* for the lowliest hind.

I can meet with no such men, even in appearance, now-a-days, and sadly fear the breed is well nigh lost. The rare complexion was so clear in red and white, with hair of snow, yet was the constitution not only unimpaired, but fit for twenty miles to cover, and then a "fagging day." The features were so chiselled and refined; the eye, the nose, and above all the mouth, bespoke the man of "other days," accompanied by an air inherently shy yet noble, and a cleanliness so consummate, you almost feared for. Whether in his court dress as sheriff, or in leathern gaiters and velvet shooting coat, there was always the white cravat, and the same indescribable, never-to-be-

purchased air of a real *bonâ fide* country gentleman. Trousers he never dreamt of, much less wore — his well-turned limbs, whether in black silk or leather, were to be seen in all their fair proportions. When descending the stairs to dinner, his costume was in keeping with his station, and worthy the handsome, stately form in lace and satin he so gracefully handed to his hospitable hoard.

I fancy I can now quite well see the worthy squire on his dark chestnut favourite mare, with his tenants and neighbours around him, enjoying a day's coursing on his estate. He loved to show them sport, give them a hearty welcome at the Hall, and make everything smile around him.

You entered the court or stable yard by a lofty, ancient, turreted gateway, surmounting which were the arms and supporters of the family sculptured in granite, now nearly defaced by the hand of time, aided by the wintry gales from the ocean. They claim the rank of baron previous to the Conquest. In the long line of stabling, equal to a barrack, you may see the names of favourite horses for generations painted over their respective stalls. The harness-room, with groined roof and oriel window, was hung with fire buckets, on which were emblazoned the family arms. Two suits of harness for four in hand, with outriders, when the office of sheriff or other great occasions called them, besides saddles, bridles, holsters, and other harness in profusion. A

dozen coats of "buff and bandolier," with as many pairs of huge jack boots used in the civil wars, were arranged in this truly baronial saddle-room exactly as described.

The manor house is of stone and red brick, with pointed gables, lofty chimneys, and oriel windows deeply mullioned in stone. There was a flight of steps leading from the terrace front to the entrance hall, sufficiently wide for fifty fair dames in hoops to walk abreast, and so low in their tiers that their red high-heeled shoes stood in no risk of tripping.

I could not make myself easy with less than half-a-dozen at a stride, and was quickly in the noble hall. The huge antique fireplace, with "dogs" for burning *timber;* the antlers, ancient arms and armour, with the long ennobled, simply emblazoned shield, high over the mantelpiece of stone, immediately strike your eye in this unrivalled entrance.

A richly painted window, with those deep tints of blue and purple that now seem lost to present art, lets a subdued light fall on the broad, inlaid oaken staircase and the numerous paintings on the walls.

All had a silent melancholy look, telling a tale "of yore," yet

> "There's a feeling within us that loves to revert
> To the merry old times that are flown,
> The days of our fathers so gladden the heart,
> That we turn with regret to our own."

This being very likely to be the case with myself, after the reminiscence I have given you (word for word from the life), I shall draw another "cheque on philosophy," and say adieu.

LETTER XX.

PHILOSOPHY — HIS HOUSE AND THEORY. — "TOMMY TROUBLES." — REMINISCENCE OF ENGLAND CONCLUDED. — — NOOKS AND CORNERS. — THE PATH OF THE PEDESTRIAN. — THE GUIDE POST. — THE FOX COVERT. — THE OLD ROMAN ROAD. — THE GIPSY CAMP. — NATURE'S TENANTS. — THE VILLAGE IN HOLDERNESS. — THE CHURCHYARD. — ALMS-HOUSES. — LABOURERS' COTTAGES. THE ALEHOUSE. — THE PACKMAN. — "VILLAGE FARE." — THE BEAN FIELD. — THE RUIN. — COAST AND INLAND SCENERY IN ENGLAND.

THE bank is closed! Old Philosophy has shut his strong box and ledger for the day, and gone, according to his wont, to his snug and comfortable country mansion. There he means to enjoy himself, with a few congenial friends, off a splendid haunch of venison, a present from my Lord Viscount Evershorte, of Oftenborrow Park, his very courteous and distinguished neighbour. The old banker is the very best of hosts; every thing is agreeable in the extreme in his well-ordered house, and its arrangements and his dinners the pleasantest in the world. He is also musical to the back-bone, for nothing *can* spoil the harmony of his mind or stomach; they are always in

such perfect tune, that the fiend Indigestion flaps his bilious wings, and flies away, scared by the internal melody.

At *his* table there are no hymeneal gusts and squalls to ruffle even the powder on his pate. Zoological glances are equally unknown. There is no blowing up of wife or cook, if a trifling culinary "contretemps" should perchance occur; no pitching decanters at John's unfurnished head for a "lapsus linguæ." The curate, or even the Irish ensign, may turn the music for his daughter, or hand her a rose, or to dinner, without causing a fit of bile or dreams of Gretna. Messrs. Gothepace, Lacktin, & Co., may either "propose" or be struck by docquet (or their house by lightning), half an hour before getting into his buggy or brougham (according to the weather), —his appetite remains the same. "An average" is his motto and consolation; it secures him sleep at night, the smile about his mouth and heart, puts the crow to flight that would venture to claw his clear and jolly face, and if it cannot put back the clock, at all events it does not *gain* upon him perceptibly. The very "tick" that would terrify most men (giving half the credit he does), has no alarms for him. He is above such fears, and far too well versed in Shakspeare ever to die "the coward's death," whatever his end may be. His anticipations include not evils in their list; consequently, being unexpected, they are not his frequent guests. When they come, he meets

them like a man; and generally finds his family name and motto ("nil desperandum") nearly a guarantee against a second visit. The old fellow's theory is sound as "heart of oak," and though we do not, like him, sit at the "receipt of custom," it may be profitable to follow it in most of our concerns of life. Imaginary or self-nursed disappointments sharpen old Time's scythe, and are indeed the pestiferous children of discontent. Pray wean the tormenting, cross-grained brats, and pack them off instanter.

Great Jove! defend me from ever becoming a "Tommy Troubles." I veritably know a man rejoicing under this most discordant name or sobriquet, to whom Sir Fretful is a pattern of equanimity and repose.

Phantasy is barren compared to the fertility of Tommy's mind in imagining slights and ills, vexatious thoughts and looks. The most minute and petty miseries he sifts, and riddles through it, as if he were washing gold. His "friends" (the villanous wags particularly) prey upon his wide interpretations as do hawks on sparrows, or pike on gudgeons. One or two, I know, keep a constant manufactory at work for Tommy's comfort, and lay the twigs to catch his tottering temper so adroitly, that they seldom miss their aim, or "draw him blank." And so it always will be — take my advice, and open an account with my douce old friend Philosophy forthwith. The interest he will give you for your investment is truly

compound, for it includes nearly every comfort you can wish.

So much for the old banker and his contrast, with both of whom I am tolerably well acquainted, and hope the introduction may prove instructive as well as profitable, at the least.

My cheque not being cashed, for the reason I have given, I must go without the needful till to-morrow. So I pray you let me conclude my reminiscence of the land I love so well, and have at once "my sigh out."

What lovely "nooks and corners" are in the pedestrian's path. Every mile you ramble through our British Isles will conduct you to a sketch well worth the pencil, that is too often passed unseen. High and crooked stiles to you are no impediment; they lead you through the silent wood, and over fields of corn and new-mown hay. They cross the high road, take you through the hamlet to the stepping-stones of the brawling brook; or if the stream is bridged by a high and narrow plank, your steps are led by fancy, without concern, or fear of "broken knees." The turn of every lane brings its variety. The arms of the white guide-post (the often welcome friend) point to the distant village spires, over a succession of scenes exquisitely pleasing to him who loves the country.

Immediately to the right, in which the post is bedded, is a patch of gorse in bloom. There lurks

the crafty, yet *domestic* fox (a virtue indeed in him): he rarely leaves his home except at night; and though at times he may love a tender pullet, and receive the housewife's hearty spite, he scorns to give you *disappointment.* It is a "certain find," and as sure a forty minutes run over swarth, firm, though elastic, that was right well warped in the general flood, and has seldom known the plough. We will now take the green lane (once a Roman road), one of those still and shady routes that completely cross our island. The hedges of thorn and holly have remained untouched for ages. The sward is short and smooth, and beautifully green, entirely covering the rustic, antiquarian way. At a turn nearly to leeward of every wind that blows, you drop upon the gipsies' camp. The men's piercing, coal-black eyes instantly lose their suspicious, threatening glance as it falls upon your pedestrian garb. There is fellowship between you. They right well know their friends from foes in the twinkling of an eye, and could give Lavater a wrinkle in physiognomy.

The very dogs know and love your vagrant steps, and after a warning yelp or two quietly curl themselves before the crackling fire, over which hangs the smoking, savoury ragout. The women are soon ready to flatter you with a career of life, in love, and gold, and beauty only equalled by your dreams. But if you let them soon find you are not of a "spooney" turn, and prefer a chat on country fairs and feasts, on dogs

or vermin, on trout or wood-craft, you may get ample amusement and instruction from the dark and wandering tribe. They love to bivouac in sylvan scenes, and have ever a civil word to him who gives it. These are "the sweet old lady's" tenants. They pay their rent in the love they bear her, and have so warmly done from a date preceding legend. No house, no home, no cunning device of man, can alienate them from the mistress of their heart, who rewards their fidelity by health and freedom, *and returns them all the rent they pay.* To them the tax-gatherer and rate-collector are unknown, in which their "ignorance is bliss" indeed.

Proceed we on our walk. The old Roman road will lead us by the two lodge gates that flank the entrance to a noble avenue of elms, a fit approach to the large and ancient mansion at its head. Passing these, we find the keeper's cottage, covered to the very chimneys with trophies of his trap and gun. Then the "ivy-mantled tower" is seen, and anon the hamlet. Before we pass the former let us steep ourselves in contemplation, and muse awhile in the still and tranquil "country churchyard,"—not like the ghostly wilderness at Caen, overrun by reckless briars and weeds, but beautifully railed round with thinnest wire, and planted here and there with roses. Various creeping plants, with Irish ivy, are trained to the old grey stone walls. The heaving turf and vicarage lawn are mown together; all is in perfect

keeping, and directed by the elegant mind and taste of the vicar's delightful lady. Her village school is close adjoining, a picture of sylvan architecture, whilst the little garden perfumes the air with sweetness.

You will see a row of rustic alms-houses, with the grateful, clean old people sitting at their doors. A stimulating sight, indeed, for Charity to display her heavenly taste, in building and endowing such soothing spots of refuge, so supremely ornamental. They may not improperly be named the "Samaritan style" of architecture, well worthy our constant study and preservation.

Next we pass the blacksmith's shop (the village news-room), and rows of cottages, thatched with reeds, where dwell the humble labourers of the place, their tiny gardens fenced by rustic railing, large enough to hold their hives of bees, a bush of rosemary, and crop of goodly onions.

This sweet village is as readily found and recognised, I fain would hope, from the present humble sketch, by those who know the east coast of England, as is the rolling German ocean, whose billows may be heard as far inland, whenever in an angry mood.

I am far too hungry to pass "the village ale-house" without a halt, and paying my respects, the sign of which (some quaint device) swings completely across the road, suspended to a beam of wood. The house is old and thatched, with quite a learned look;

being literally "sub tegmine fagi," and nearly hidden by the ancient tree, whose boughs form an ample shade in the heat of day, when the rustic bon-vivants regale themselves with a chat and foaming tankard. At this hour the little hostelrie is entirely in repose; none but the chance wayfarer calls to rest his limbs, as does your correspondent and the itinerant merchant of the pack, who, his village calls concluded, stops to refresh, and surely, on the profits he will drive with the thrifty, tidy dame. His Irish sheeting, shirting, table-covers, and bit of muslin for her cap, are too seductively displayed to miss a nibble, so both are pleased. She now, with petticoat tucked up, and smiling face, curtsies, and offers all attention to your wants. How clean and cheering the little inn appears. Every thing is rubbed and scrubbed by the good dame herself, and the lively elbows of her bonny handmaiden, till they shine like polished agate. The settles of oak run far into the wide and ample chimney, the walls of which are faced with clean Dutch tiles, high above your head. The little round white table, with solid top, is scoured, and seems of snow. The hearth has been duly raked and chalked; the floor rubbed with a block of sandstone; all is ready for the coming guest, and in order completely "apple-pie." High over the mantelshelf hangs the long duck-gun, with a harpoon and pair of spurs, kept, like their household compeers, hereditarily bright.

Within "the house" is a small and neat apartment, dignified by the name of "parlour." Here are the luxuries of a carpet, some scriptural prints, and furniture that knows no rest, so incessant is its toilette at the hands of the ever-bustling dame. You must not fail to notice the china closet in the corner, open, with pardonable conceit, to show the rare old crockery within. Here it is proposed you should eat your eggs and rasher; but the settle and Dutch tiles, with the little plain tree-table, have too many charms for me. My friend the packman too seems ready for a chat, and to promise no little fun in that bright, gay Tipperary eye. I hope you are in my way of thinking, and can fall-to unaffectedly at the smoking, clear-complexioned, rosy ham, and plump, white, milky eggs "with what appetite you may." These, with fresh-baked bread, and butter, with watercresses from the stream hard by, is all the fare I offer.

Such is one of the many thousand scenes to be met with on a walk through England. Their features vary, as you near the hills, the coast, or purely farming districts; yet all have their separate interest and rural beauties.

We started from the patch of gorse, on the right of the silent country guide, whose white arms in this particular district are covered with curious village names, with quite a Roman sound. Let us take a short ramble to the left, mounting the stile,

that will conduct us through the field of beans in flower. What a nosegay for the Heavens! the bouquet ascends on the "incense-breathing morn," in delicious fragrance. Far to the left are meadows that justly claim the palm throughout the realm, for depth of soil and grazing capabilities; and, farther still, "the sea!"

Deep in a little hollow beyond the beans, are the ruins of a large and holy pile, once a monastery, one of the earliest in foundation. It served the dark ages of its intent and time, but now happily crumbles to the earth, making way for the more useful haunts of men; though it throws its inimitable charm around, and is truly the poetry of the scene.

In these "nooks and corners" we stand alone, combining as they do the most perfect cleanliness and comfort, transcendent beauty of prospect, unimpaired rusticity in features, and hallowed as they are "by fiction's most eloquent lore." You cannot find a parallel to this in France. The glaring comfortless cafés, the rattle of billiard balls, the striding gendarme, with the "Parisian fashions" stuck in the tiny windows, with the townish signs and air throughout, would ruin any hamlet, however rural in itself.

In our own dear country you cannot well go wrong. The "nooks" that nestle on the rugged coasts are so numerous and lovely, that it is a vain attempt indeed to name them; but try "Ilfra-

combe," "Ventnor," "Arbroath," "Bangor," "Douglas Bay," or "St. Leonard's on the Sea," for your first excursion. Then proceed inland to "Bakewell," "Baslow," "Ambleside," "The Vale of Grassmere," "Dunkeld," and "Furness." These, with the places I have mentioned in my former rambles, will amply reward your footsteps. Should you walk from Middleham Moor by Jervaulx Abbey, (keeping the banks of the river), to Bedale, and so through Wensleydale, to Harrowgate, as I have, you will not regret the extra stroll. The Surrey hills, the Vale of Belvoir all through, my own most beauteous county (Derbyshire), the Yorkshire vales and wolds, are likewise scenes I know and love so well, that they stand unrivalled in my heart.

They should be seen at leisure for full and true enjoyment, as you sip the purple juice of your Lafitte in silent ecstasy, not hurried over as if you had a duty to perform without the palate. The tedium of this mental diet will doubtless make you long for change; so again I say adieu.

LETTER XXI.

FRENCH OPINION OF ENGLISH CHARACTER. — THE EVIDENT MISTAKE. — OUR "IMPULSE," AND LIABILITIES FROM IT. —THE ENGLISH AT PARIS AFTER WATERLOO. — EXCELLENT CUSTOMERS TO THE FRENCH. — THE COSSACK AND JONAH.—"THE NATIONAL LEDGER."—BRITISH LETHARGY IN THE FIELD.— THE MEET WITH FOX-HOUNDS.— "THE OLD AND NEW YEAR." — THE COVERT SIDE. — "GONE AWAY!"— "THE FIELD." — THE SCENE AT THE VILLAGE. — FOX-HUNTING IN ENGLAND. —THE HUNTER. — AN ANECDOTE.

It is the prevailing fashion here to imagine the English a cold, lethargic, calculating race; a human steam engine in fact: that their mental machinery is set in motion only by the same powerful though inanimate stimulus; and that their motive for action, on all matters alike, proceeds purely from a foresight, or rather hope, of a profitable result.

Like many other presumptions or libels, originally received and retained from hearsay, or by prejudice, this is utterly, absurdly untrue. There does not breathe a nation so completely or ridiculously beset by the open-handed, unprofitable, yet amiable fault of "impulse," as the English taken as a body. Our trifling liabilities amongst ourselves, called "the Debt," or rather *perfect securities* for investing the

fruits of our industry in a certain never-failing income, let us call them, in their *best* apparel, taking thereby a "crumb of comfort" equal to the delight the man felt on the loss of his corns, when both his legs were carried away by a chain shot. However, they will well serve our present purpose, to stand against the character the French would give us, of never losing sight of profit, in terrific "figures."

The only pillage our soldiers ever got in this country *came from home*, fresh from our own Mint; and the only difference Paris felt on their departure, after holding the gay place as unqualified owners and masters, was sincere regret at the loss of such excellent, honourable, and ready-money customers. Bills at war's thumping prices were paid, even to "the boots," and never was there such a roaring trade seen in the capital, before or since. The Cossack may perhaps have sweetened "his lonely round" by a stolen swig at the lantern swinging over his savage head, as he mounted guard through "night's cheerless noon;" but I fancy his was a case in point of treasure trove or appropriated. Good liquor is generally most esteemed when rather oily. The Russian is therefore a perfect connoisseur.

Had Jonah been a Cossack, the great leviathan would have anything but a sinecure in his tenant; he would have been eaten out "of house and harbour" in a month's cruise at latest. If ever the creature's comfortable compendium of "lodging,

meat, drink, and clothing," could be imagined in a single item, it would surely be "a whale's belly to a Russian," besides a yacht and diving bell ever at his service.

The Emperor should turn his thoughts to Greenland for imperial colonisation, and leave off Circassia for a while; he would perhaps find profit in the transfer, and considerably assist his commissariat.

"Return we to our mutton." I set out with the attempt to prove our people not quite so abominably phlegmatic or calculating, in their aim or time, as it is the fashion to accuse them; and need not overhaul our national ledger for the sum in cash and life, with which we may safely debit "impulse" in our neighbour's service, the balance showing the *profit* we received in the friendly fray.

There is a meet and "certain find" in the Pytchley country, called "Waterloo," that will save the more serious reference, and amply serve to illustrate a little British lethargy, "when the wind's at south, and cloudy is the morn."

"Hounds and the men I sing," who hunt the gallant fox, or rather let me say, I will attempt a very humble sketch, for your amusement, of a scene in country life, unequalled, matchless, nay, inimitable in all the world besides; viz. a "meet with fox hounds," or what *we* in our simplicity call "the chase." A quill plucked from the eagle's wing when fresh from rolling clouds, and dipped in inspiration,

could scarce do justice to the noble theme. So, well may I doubt the power of my lowly ditty to put your imagination in a swoon, or give you a "faint idea" of its indescribable though oft-told charms.

"The old year," with its disappointments, faults, and many, many blessings, (had we but the gratitude to own them,) has been added to the vast catacomb where repose the "days of yore." Its young successor is cradled in the very lap of sporting. The gale, "Whoop!" and "Tally-ho!" comprise its only lullaby. Pan and Diana stand sponsors to the hardy youngster, while every true son of Britain with the least cross of Nimrod in his veins, hastens with hound and horn to do honour to its nativity. The "southerly wind" that came as special messenger for our late old friend Eighteen hundred and forty-three has put to flight the last flake that fell on Christmas-day, when the holly, yew, and misseltoe so grace the seasonable, joyous, yet wintry scene. The icicles that then hung so brilliantly pendent from the eaves of all our homes and outbuildings, have trickled away in tears at the obsequies of the old year.

The ground, in lieu of being hard as "frozen tyranny," as was the case when the yule log blazed, and mirth ran high, only half a dozen days ago, is now in excellent order,—though moist not deep, and capital going over the ancient close-cropped sward you will meet with in the country I am taking you to, with just enough of fallow to make you know and

appreciate the difference. As I have said at starting the meet is "Waterloo," a celebrated covert in the most verdant, fertile part of all Northamptonshire. The scene that meets your eye as you leave the Harborough road and ride across the elastic turf, is literally "marrow to the bones," and well worthy the glorious honoured name given to the "fixture." Five hundred scarlet coats, with as many more of divers greens and blacks, compose the sylvan forces. The horses, the most magnificent in the world, (of which some men have two, and even three for their own especial riding,) must be seen indeed to be adequately imagined. Their power and breeding are only equalled by their superb condition and perfect grooming; they shine like satin, and seem to tread on air, so anxious are they to perform the work before them.

Several "fairy forms" are in the field, and in their gentle "habits" "*immollet all our mores.*" There is one in blue and scarlet, with the dark gray eye and auburn hair, that you will do well to follow—*if you can*; she will lead you, at a "dusting" pace, through all the mazes of the exciting "gallop," if you only ask her to be your partner; she right well knows the figure, and keeps time from the music in her soul. What a beauteous sight it is to see her, as she sits her chesnut like an Arab, her fair complexion heightened by the long and early ride to covert, her tiny hands holding the gallant steed, so resolutely yet

so light — her rounded bust and slender waist, with well set-on head, and air throughout of a finished, fearless horsewoman. Oh! you should be a very clever and handsome "Centaur" to do her justice in the dance.

"But leave off your chat: see! the covert appears," when all is comparative silence, and thrilling, exquisite tranquillity. The huntsman alone raises his full and mellow voice, as he cheers on his lively hounds to find the artful foe; ere long, one "whimpers" in the gorse, and is instantly hailed by name in encouraging, friendly accents; the tones of each being as well known to him as are those of Lablache from Grisi by yourself. "Hark to Forester!" now echoes through the wood, and far away over the upland mead, with other sylvan war cries, that startle the very satyrs from their slumbers. Then a shrill view halloo! and "Gone away!" are heard, that send the blood of both yourself and horse dancing like molten quicksilver though your veins. Now comes the crash, as the jolly pack open simultaneously their joyous throats, with a burst of music that would electrify the dead. They gleam like flashes of living lightning through the brake, and hotly pursue the unkennelled "varmint." The Squire, in an energetic screech, solicits one favour at your hands,—to "*let 'em settle,* and then catch them if you can."

Now, mark the horse! In his eye and nostrils

rolls indeed collected fire; if you do not let him go, madness and rage possess him. Give him only his head with judgment, and aid him gently with your hand, (the less the better)—he will rarely make mistakes, and expire rather than give in. And now for the lethargy of Britain! you will see it going straighter than the crow can fly, for fifty minutes, over bristling fence and yawning brook, at the rate of twenty miles an hour; and after running into the well-hunted fox, questing for a second, with very probably the same result; and moreover, shaved again, long before the light, ready for a daily repetition.

I know a gallant devotee who said, "England would be *bearable* as a place of residence if there were no summers or (a sacrilegious rascal!) Sundays in the land;" meaning, to hunt every day in the year, as he most assuredly would do, as well as hundreds more, if it were possible to do so in decency. You must remember this was said in an age of *iron*, and will bear a translation as liberal as the sport he had enjoyed to cause it.

The English have all a disposition towards hydrophobia. I have seen our "lethargic, calculating" natives set wild, and deliciously delirious, not from the bite of a dog, but his *bark;* ay, and to an extent of voluntary, enduring physical energy that all the drums in France could not inspire throughout a cantonment. I mean, from the soul-inspiring, ecstatic, joyous cadence of a hound in "full cry."

The effect on a whole parish is literally magical in the extreme. As the pack comes sweeping near the village, every thing like restraint or discipline ceases at the sound.

The worthy rector, if not "out," stands at his gate, and bows with a sporting reverence to the master of the hounds, offering the hearty hospitalities of the manse.

Old women rush to the doors, bottle and glass in hand, bewailing more than ever their age and sex. They clap the "whips" and huntsmen on the back, ready to kill all with kindness.

The school lads upset the usher, and dare the dominie to do his worst: they must and *will* see the hounds, if their backs hereafter pay the penalty they now so wilfully incur.

Now clodhoppers desert the plough and flail, and flounder over the fences, dikes, and heavy fallows, till fit to drop with fatigue and sweat, when they mount the tops of barns or the highest trees, fancying they hear or see something at more than a league's distance that money could not buy. Some are capital runners, and will keep the hounds in view in a most surprising manner for nearly a day togethe

I have heard of one great stout farming lad that left his master's work to join the hounds (the temptation being too strong) who on receiving a hearty thwacking for his pains simply said, "Lord—measter,

I wish I wor a foxhound, and you might wop me as you like."

No heart that ever beat under scarlet could excel poor Giles's thorough sporting aspiration: he wished to hunt and worry the fox himself, envying the very hounds their delightful life.

Everything seems infected by the cry of hounds, with delirium floating in the air. The very cattle in the fields, a moment ago grazing so listlessly, chewing their cud with dreaming eye, now flourish their sporting "sterns," and wildly follow the hounds, till stopped by some fence *they* cannot jump, when they stand gazing with flashing eyeballs, intensely interested and disappointed, and prove a certain welcome "wrinkle" to many a man "thrown out."

The scene at the village beggars all description. Parties of the hunt, in black or scarlet, scurry to the different farms for momentary refreshment. Every thing is at your own command, from the savoury pork pie to the sweet lips of the smiling country lasses. Never was such work! The old tottering grandsire, who once "went like a bird" himself, bustles about in childish glee, and anxiously inquires "if you have killed." Urchins bestride their donkeys, and hasten to the fray. Ham, and bread and cheese, and ale and grog, meal and water for your horse — *every* thing is produced with the heartiest alacrity.

"Time is up!" Muddy boots again enter the

stirrup, hands are shaken, cigars lighted. The girls are kissed or winked at (generally both), and in an instant the village is left deserted by every man that can find a mount, or squeeze his limbs into a run, to see "the hounds."

The pure English, exhilarating scene I have here attempted to describe, as occurring on "New Year's Day," is enacted in nearly every county throughout Great Britain, (in many, by several packs of hounds at once), only differing in the size of the "fields," and peculiarities of country; causing genuine health, employment to thousands, and the best possible feeling from the duke to the ploughman, to spring from the joyous, hallowed cadence of a hound, as well as being the sole cause of retaining a breed of horses only to be found in England, combining as they do immense power, pace, and beauty.

An English hunter, with "a rider on his back," is an extraordinary animal indeed: he appears not to know the word "impracticable;" he can fly, climb, or creep, to suit the emergency, and does it all, from natural sagacity, aided by the most devoted, heart-burning love of the chase.

A horse, bred on a farm in the country I have so particularly, and I hope affectionately described, cleared thirty-three feet, over timber, water, and a rasping quickset hedge, with very unsound ground from which to make his spring, to increase the ap-

parent difficulty. Yet I saw him do it with perfect ease.

If you will step out eleven-yards (nearly duelling distance), you will receive the benefit of exercise in forming your ideas of a horse's power, when willing to show it, as he did in the jump I have alluded to, and which hundreds saw performed.

The "made hunter" (as the equestrian professor is called) seems to have invisible wings, or extra legs, as the case may require them. Nothing stops him. As a fashionable dealer once said to an aristocratic purchaser when showing an animal of high character and "figure," "Sir, he can jump a house or go through the pantry window, as it suits him. No hounds are too fast, no day too long for him; he has the courage of a lion with the docility of a lamb, and you may ride him in a thread. Weight, did you say, sir? he could carry the national debt, and not bate a sixpence."

The eulogium passed on the hunter by the doubly inspired dealer is elegantly figurative in its parts of speech, but scarcely flattering to the horse: he deserves the whole of it, divested only from the stable accompaniment, or "chaunting."

There are few horses (whatever their breeding) that will not jump naturally. I once saw a party of red-coats "pounded" at a strong, high post and rail; when a "yokel" came up on a huge, rough-looking brute he had taken from a cart, determined

upon "seeing the hounds" as far as he could, and offered to ride him against the fence, to break it down for "the squire," whom he knew, and reverenced beyond "Blackbird's knees;" but "Blackbird" had no notion of even "barking" himself to please anybody, and hopped over like his winged namesake, apparently quite as easily to himself, leaving the Nimrods gazing in anything but admiration, and Scroggins with the hounds.

During our disastrous retreat upon Corunna, we were terribly galled by a strong body of infantry, safely intrenched (as they imagined) from cavalry, by a wide ditch or drain. The fifteenth hussars gave a view halloo! cleared it in their stride, and charged with the united pluck of English foxhunters and dragoons. The result could not be doubtful under such a stimulus — it was "a kill" of course. "The Duke" had foxhounds with him regularly when in the Peninsula, I believe, and could not have had a more congenial, exciting camp follower than a huntsman to a British army. The utility as well as pleasure our troops derived from the noble sport, has been instanced in the anecdote I have related.

As it is now *my* "stable time," I wish you once more "a fair good night."

LETTER XXII.

A FRENCH DILIGENCE. — "THE WHIP" OF OTHER DAYS IN ENGLAND. — A CONTRAST. — "THE TANTIVY." — A BIT OF COACHING AT NIGHT. — THE "JEHU." — THE FOUR BAYS. — THE ROAD-SIDE. — THE CITY AND HOTEL. — THE STAGE-COACH AS ONCE SEEN IN ENGLAND. — ARISTOCRATIC WHIPS. — THE OLD BOTTLE-NOSED REGIME. — PROSPECT OF RAILWAYS BEING VOTED SLOW COACHES. — THE OLD MAIL-COACH. — A ROAD SCENE. — THE NEXT IMPROVEMENT. — THE "ZAMIEL" OF THE RAIL. — STAG'S LINE. — "MINCING LANE." — THE ISLE OF MAN. — A FRIENDLY HINT, MUCH NEEDED. — A POT POURRI.

LOITERING in the Rue de Paris the other evening, I witnessed the departure of the various diligences with something like a sigh for old times, and "a bit of coaching." I have passed the heaving lumbering mountains hundreds of times without any feeling, excepting perhaps one of sincere reverence for the yelping cur dancing on their summits, that is set there, I suppose, to keep the conducteur and all the passengers awake throughout the livelong dreary night — a luxury indeed! particularly for him whose weary head is nodding on the strap, hanging pendent from the roof as a swinging pillow for the "middle man." On the evening in question, I could not refrain from drawing a contrast between the vehicle,

the horses, and their driver, and one of our stage coaches, when "the whip" was in its glory, whose "crack," alas, is heard no more, and whose very existence has all but faded into a Christmas tale.

In a very few years we may see some old-fashioned print of a four-horse coach, exciting the surprise that such things could be; but that will be all that is left to remind us of the by-gone curiosity.

Let me, for "auld lang syne," take hold of the reins of memory, and go back a stage or two, just to illustrate the old print when you hang it in your smoking, gun, or saddle room.

For any two appliances intended for the same purpose, it is almost impossible to conceive a greater contrast than that between a French diligence (greatly improved as it is) and an English stage coach, as it was appointed within the last dozen or twenty years at latest. In another such a lapse, the old reaper will have booked a generation in his way-bill, and the whole thing become a fable.

The diligence for Rouen and Paris set off as usual amidst the most discordant din. Innumerable bells tinkled, accompanied by the barking mongrel mounting guard on the banquette. The whole street was in a row: swarms of parrots, men and monkeys, all chattered together incessantly. Fifty braves were marching down the street, beating their dismal tattoo, when the bearded driver lighted his short black pipe and mounted high into the air with a bundle of ropes

and whit-leather in his hands. There, in his blue linen frock or blouse, he sat huddled up in a heap, appearing about as graceful in his seat as a drunken butcher would in a wheelbarrow.

The huge machine looked like a locomotive bedlam, with five wild animals, equally, and appropriately mad, to draw it. Away they went, galloping, rolling, barking, shrieking, and cracking, helter-skelter, up the street, over the narrow drawbridge and round the sharp turns, guided I should think alone by a merciful Providence, for nothing else could prevent a capsize under such human pilotage.

Then my mind's eye wandered to a night scene I have often vastly enjoyed in England, only a very few years ago, when, having the "box seat" of the "Tantivy," I adjusted the apron over my well-protected knees, and prepared for half-a-dozen hours by lamp light.

See the cleanliest of all the clean "Jehus" who then flourished on the road, quietly take his way-bill from the book-keeper, and go up to his horses' heads. The "near" leader he lets out, and the "off" curbs up a link, after patting, with his well-gloved hand, the necks of his shining nags, who stand pricking their high-bred ears, pawing the ground occasionally, to show their eagerness to start. He takes a careful though rapid glance, to see that everything is right, gathers his broad reins in his right hand, and springs with the accomplished step of practice into his seat, where his

box coats are folded neatly under him. Mark well his attitude: his knees are close together, his arms balanced, so as to leave them both play and strength to guide his fiery team; his back is straight, his head erect, as, taking hold of his well-tried hollycrop, he whirls the thong so gracefully round it from hilt to point with the very gentlest jerk of his manly wrist. The handsome coach has eight outsides, exclusive of the box seat, with four in. The night beautifully fine, but dark, though the brilliant lamps make every thing plainly visible for a few yards a-head and on each side of you, and form quite a galloping halo round the scene. You scarcely hear a word or sound. "All right" is passed from behind, the rugs are whisked off the horses, and at a chirp as dulcet as a thrush or cricket, they spring from the gateway under which they had so quietly stood, a picture of docility and intelligence.

Don't speak, if you would retain your neighbour's good opinion, till everything has settled. Let him thread his way (as he will with ease) through the labyrinth of pair and four-wheeled vehicles he meets at every yard, making you involuntarily shrink and grasp the railing of your seat as you shave past the whirring cab or lumbering "buss." Let him clear the town, and get his horses in their stride; you may then venture upon some remark in passing, and be assured he will anxiously look for its complexion to test his companion for the

night. If you are of a congenial, observing turn, the half-dozen hours will take ten miles along with each before you have got through half the good tales he will tell you, in the quaint, amusing strain, some of the knights so eloquently excelled in.

How smoothly rolls the "Tantivy!" not a sound is heard beyond the guard's musically winding horn at intervals, as he draws the fresh team from their stables, or the poor drowsy wretch of a bar-keeper out of bed to open the gate, when all good folks should be at rest. Gladly he sees you through, and scuds over the road in his white night-cap like some prowling rural ghost. The four bays step along most deliciously; their breath ascends in the clear night air, in wreaths of living vapour. Everything is visible within the glare of your lamps, even to the first yard or two in the dark plantations that flank the splendid road. You may see the very hares startled and scurrying away to more gloomy solitudes. Now we meet with a steep hill, when the guard dismounts to put on the drag, and at the request of the coachman probably polls up the wheelers an extra link. Down the slight declivities he rattles his horses at a gallop, to push them up the opposing hill, which (as with energy in any difficulty of life), they half surmount before they think of slacking speed. Now we enter an ancient town, whose low turretted gateway you are warned to avoid by the ever-attentive Jehu, who practically illustrates

the necessity of "stooping" occasionally in our journey with him, as well as in that through life.

All is still in the old city till we arrive at the comfortable hotel for supper, where a brilliant fire, cold round of beef and pigeon-pie, with tea and coffee, await all those inclined to refresh and travel on, with the chamber-maid and pan of coals ready for such as would go no further. So much for night work, which is vastly pleasing to all those who love to sit behind a good team, with nothing to be heard but their lively hoofs as they patter on the hard macadamised road, in a fine starlight, dark, or moonlight night, as the case may be.

Horses all seem particularly gay at night, with a sagacity far beyond their accounted superiors,—their masters. It is surprising how readily they see and avoid a danger, and how pleasantly they work together, and step along.

The coaches that I particularly allude to, such as the "Hark Forward," the "Bang Up," the "Tantivy," and "Taglioni," were horsed as well as it was possible for money, and the most consummate judgment, to put their teams together. Nothing was spared to do the thing well,— blood, power, food, grooming, and short stages, were strictly looked to, in the palmy days of coaching. The harness was of the very best description, with handsome fittings in brass or silver; the coach, with square boots, folding steps, and well-cushioned seats, was painted of a

sober, yet brilliant colour, with a *tout ensemble*, I grieve to say, now lost to present sight.

The coachman of these long and fast coaches was in many cases "every inch a gentleman," with an air so tidy, clean, and strictly "of the cloth," that it was a delight indeed to sit beside him. When the old top-booted, rum-and-milk, bottle-nosed breed went out, with their huge shawls tied up to their blinking eyes, they were succeeded by a very different set of "whips," without alluding to "the Duke," the many captains, or Sir Vincent, who drove from whim, as well as occasionally from some more solid reason — for when a lady (who was "delicate" in offering her gratuity) said to the latter, "Perhaps, Sir, you would be ashamed if I were to offer you a shilling," he set her mind at ease by replying, "No, indeed, madam, not if you were to make it a sovereign."

The professionals who drove for the last fifteen or twenty years (whilst the *infant* steam was being rocked by the giant mind, in its cradle of the universe!) were of the very neatest cut, with manners just diluted with a sufficiency of "aqua vitæ" to befit them for their calling, and (be it said to their praise) all customers alike, from the quaker lady with her grandchildren inside, to "Bill Scott" on the box. For the former he had the most undeniable bow and civility, and for the latter a bit of slang and the brightest glass of ale between London and York to offer, without the accusation of a hasty

decision being applied to either. Though don't mistake me here,—they were perfectly sober men, being far too knowing to injure themselves by any ridiculous excess. When the coach arrived at its destination, the whip was chucked to an admiring helper, the reins were thrown right and left with an air it is impossible to describe, and our friend's duties were ended for the day. Anon you might see him dressed most sprucely, yet in quiet taste, either strolling up the main street, or "treating" himself "half-play" to the theatre with his "missus." In the smoke room or other public rendezvous he was quite an oracle, and respected according to the extent of his worldly knowledge and the miles he had driven.

I really hope the day may come when the cruel fate and downfall of coaching will be yet avenged,—when railways shall be voted slow, and looked upon as curiosities of a crawling age, — when some new "Concentrated Patent Whirlwind" Society, with the "Guaranteed Safety Explosive Junction," shall have the day, till the "Imperial Treble-forked Electric" shall cut *them* out, as steam did the "Tantivy."

How short-sighted were we poor mortals when we imagined the "London and Devonport," or "Halifax and London" fast mails were sufficient for getting along. These, and many more, got over the ground at the rate of ten and twelve miles an hour, and were to my notion the very beau-ideal of travelling. The make of the old mail was exceedingly handsome,

strong, and perfectly unique. The exquisite colour, royal arms, with the scarlet uniform of both guard and coachman, gave the equipage quite a distinguished air as you saw it opening on your sight far over the distant hill, as you sat on the "down mail," that was so rapidly giving it the meeting. Who does not recollect the thrilling interest of the scene? Your spirits raised by going at full speed, as "cayenne seasons curry." The shrill yet sweetly winding note of the long tin horn, echoing away far over the lovely country, compared to which all your bugles, "trumpets, and shawms," are veriest discord. The exhilarating, refreshing day in early autumn. The lively nags spinning along — the wheelers in a good ten-mile trot, with the high-bred leaders galloping, and snapping playfully at each other, being so completely within their work. The cross-bars swinging merrily to and fro, with a coachman next you who can lay his silken whipcord under his near leader's ear as lightly as an accomplished angler can cast the smallest moth, as well as explain every point of interest on your delightful journey. Well might the greatest bard and most exquisite judge of life exclaim, — "What a delightful thing 's a turnpike road!" for so it is, or alas! that I should be obliged to say it — *was*.

Away we bowl over the fine smooth gravelly road; receiving the friendly nods of the "up mail" in passing, without a spoke being visible in the whirling wheels. Nothing could be more delicious

than a seat on a mail-coach; traversing as it did the most romantic exquisite parts of England, with accommodation for passengers in every town impossible to be excelled. The hotels where the mails dined or supped were the very best in the whole world, having their excellent fare smoking hot at a moment's notice, with very moderate charges. This way of moving about one would have thought good, and fast enough for any one not on an errand of life and death, and I still hope the day will come when every man may make and travel by his own lightning, and give the "Fire King" the go-by. The invention will suit all the "flash" fellows at all events, and shares soon be at a *thundering* premium, I have no doubt. For myself (having had my sigh for the last crack of the whip), I shall place my future hopes in my knapsack, in preference to consigning them to the diligence I set out by describing, or "take a quiet ride in some green lane," whilst such a path remains to us, one becoming daily more difficult to find.

How changed is the face of our own beautiful country within the last fifteen years, as the casual traveller, or soaring aeronaut, must view it! Instead of the purely sylvan, picturesque, yet chiselled features of the "Leeming Lane," or Great North Road, with hundreds more, winding through the varied beauties of hamlets, farming lands, and rich domains, it is tatooed and scored in formal hideous lines, com-

pared to which "the rule of three" is epic. Huge straight embankments of damp eyesight-wearying clay; immense, dismal, subterranean horrors; innumerable aqua, via, and even lingua ducts brand, bore, and disfigure it from shore to shore. Black canopies of suffocating smoke, with clouds of boiling hissing vapours, fill the air, accompanied by the piercing whistle of the rushing, fiery "Zamiel," and alas! at times not without the shrieks of his numerous victims. The "lines," when backed by "act of parliament," issuing from an arena whose walls might be papered by the framers' scrip, may cross the verdant smiling park, putting to flight the herds of trooping deer, and that which is far more to be regretted, the hallowed privacy of the scene. They may pass the very windows of the ancient Elizabethan home of the "old English gentleman," and mock him with the "compensation" it is impossible to make. They level or burrow under mountains, cross or dry up rivers, vouchsafe not a thought on woods, rocks, swamps, or cities in their iron stride, and are stopped only by the deep and trackless ocean till they can be ferried over, and recommence and carry it through the torrid or frigid zones, or across every land from pole to pole where the yellow dross is known or coveted.

The magician's wand is an ennuied, used-up, pithless baton, compared to the "grey goose quill" of the spruce gentleman in the "*cut-away* coat," whose

autograph is all-sufficient to carry out the wishes of "The Great National Bamboozle, Bubble-and-Squeak" railway company (or Stags' Line). A dip of *his* ink makes harlequin into a leaden image, in comparison to the vagaries, ups, downs, and devilries they can show their respective audiences. It is "any odds" on the pen in Old Broad Street, or *Mincing* Lane," from whence scrip is not unfrequently issued with an electric telegraph to "the house" contemplated in the new arrangements. Where will all this end? is the natural question that would suggest itself. People can have no occasion for houses, if the lines are to be kept going; and should live and die on them altogether, to *return the money*. If the subject were not so sad in the perspective for those who have embarked their all in the "rail," one might be disposed to have a hearty laugh at some of the ridiculous prospectuses now "provisionally registered." Fancy a railroad in the Isle of Man, for instance; a scheme seriously contemplated, I believe, with the chairman and his address, down to the bank and secretary, regularly given. The island, with the exception of a month or two in summer, when visited by English tourists, who can travel now from one end of it to the other (about thirty miles) for a couple of shillings, is the quiet residence of the original Manx and other families, generally living there for the sake of fresh air, economy, and retirement. Trade there is none beyond the herring-

fishery,—an excellent brewery, by the way,—one or two other trifling undertakings, and the retail necessaries of life. Every thing wags on in the little island in the daily peaceful routine of life, now that it is recovering from "the reign of terror" it suffered under at the hands of "Joint Stock Banking," that proved indeed a rascally inroad on its resources and tranquillity. There are only four small towns in the little kingdom, at each of which a man might bait himself and horse, and sleep at home, wherever it might be. Still there is to be a railway, under the name of the Great or Grand Something! what it is to carry, Heaven only knows, for the whole population would scarcely make up a load. I expect to hear of one in the "Calf" ere long,—a small island about a hundred yards distant from the Isle of Man, containing a few hundred acres of land, on which one family and many rabbits reside, who are constantly playing the game of "hide and seek." Surely such a territory as the "Calf" cannot escape the raging epidemic. A prospectus might be dished up, most eloquently, and "provisionally registered," at all events.

If the good Manx would establish a soap manufactory or two, persuade the cottagers to become purchasers, and build their pigsties *outside* their houses; if they would level their vast wasteful embankments (or fences), run up others, more sightly and economical in the end; drain their lands and replace their

superstitious notions with others of a more industrious cleanly tendency; they would improve the little island (for which I have a true and sincere liking), far more than any ridiculous railway can accomplish; and in this kindly spirit I recommend them not to forget the lesson they have already received from a more flattering hand-bill in its appearance than the one now stuck up (I make no doubt) about Douglas, Peel, Castletown, and Ramsey; where profits, rapid fortunes, and Manx Paradises were all but guaranteed, by an equally formidable array of illustrious concoctors; one or two in "cut-away" coats, according to the prevailing fashion.

Having now made you up a *pot-pourri* of the road and rail, past, present, and in anticipation, I can only trust you may be able to select a stage to your liking, and unyoke my prosy Pegasus, if the ancient nag ever changes his poetic step, so as to allow me to make use of his honoured name; if not, I beg his equestrian pardon, and, as a pedestrian, am any thing but anxious for a mount, or even a "ride and tie."

LETTER XXIII.

REGRET AT LEAVING NORMANDY.—THE TOUT ENSEMBLE OF HAVRE DE GRACE.—THE REQUISITE IMPROVEMENTS —CLOSE-FISTED AUTHORITIES.—HORRIBLE NIGHT IN A HAUNTED CHAMBER.—THE SEINE.—ITS NEGLECTED ADVANTAGES AND DANGEROUS NAVIGATION.—THE WANT OF A READING AND EXCHANGE ROOM AT HAVRE.—VILLANOUS PAVEMENT.—BEAUTIES OF NORMANDY.—NORMAN KNIGHTS, WHO CROSSED OVER WITH THE CONQUEROR.—LORD BROUGHAM'S EXCELLENT LETTER. —EDITORIAL COMBATANTS.—THE ABSENCE OF ALL ILL-WILL IN ENGLAND TOWARDS FRANCE.—GOOD WISHES, AND DEPARTURE FOR LA VENDÉE.

I TAKE leave of Normandy with considerable regret. It is, without exception, the best specimen of the French continent; being healthy in the extreme, exceedingly picturesque, and well cultivated, with a population who, in point of cleanliness, straightforward bearing, and quiet well-behaved manners, are superior to any other part of France that I have visited. I have scarcely met with an instance of the diminutive, waspish, vain, and quarrelsome Gaul you are so overrun with in Paris and some other places. Havre is completely free from the presence of this terrible personage, and is certainly the very prettiest, most lively, yet at the same

time tranquil seaport town I ever was in, and one that gains upon your affections the better you become acquainted with it. Its *tout ensemble*, standing for instance in the "Place Louis Seize," is exceedingly pleasing. Before you, you have a splendid dock, or "bassin du commerce," filled with fine square-rigged vessels; on your left, the finely-wooded heights of Ingouville, with the pavilions of the merchants built of white brick, with their green jalousies and pretty gardens, some most tastefully arranged in every respect. On your right is the long, quaint, always gay "Rue de Paris," concluded by the harbour, and far away the sweet glittering Seine and ocean. I make no hesitation in saying, we have no such port in our country, combining the clean, picturesque, gay, yet quiet coup-d'œil that Havre possesses.

The docks are numerous but very deficient, in accommodation for the increasing trade; and justice compels me to say that the main points of attraction are as nearly as possible to be dated to the natural advantages of the place, for there are very few five franc pieces laid out upon improvements in any shape. The *fossé*, for instance, which forms the only approach to the charming jetty, is an accumulation of offensive stagnant mud, the deposit of ages, and at low water perfectly *pugilistic* in its abominable odour (being enough to knock you down). This might easily be removed; but, as

the garçon said at the Hôtel de l'Europe, (when I complained of being put into a bedroom immediately over a dozen horses,) "Oh, you English gentlemans is so very particular; a French family shall go in, and does not mind some stink! Ce n'est rien." The room I allude to was an *imposing*, grand, double-bedded one, with pendule, marble table, and "delicious curtains," all placed over the stables, to which luxuries the last comer was conducted with much ceremony, thinking himself not a little favoured in getting into such quarters, "au premier." I shall never forget the hideous night I passed in it. It was in high summer and excessively hot. After writing for some time, and sniffing about to discover whence the aroma proceeded, without avail, or dreaming of having quadrupeds for my neighbours, I retired to bed, and was awoke in the dead of night by a perfume that seemed to press on my temples, and take away my very breath and senses. The night with the "haunted picture" of Geoffrey Crayon was peaceful and trance-like, compared to the one I passed in the chamber over the écurie of the Hotel de l'Europe, when my slumbers were oppressed by a whole stud of night-mares (or horses). It was terrific; when I was asleep, and unconscious of the *cause* of the loaded atmosphere, that seemed a loathsome phantom in its intensity of horrid vapour, leading my dreams to some congenial subterranean,

suffocating cave, tenanted by ghouls and unearthly horrors, that I recollect with shuddering.

I found an American gentleman in the salle à manger, who had been one night in the "reserved room" before my turn came, and who was removed, like myself, on insisting upon it. But there was no apology or excuse offered; indeed, I believe the people thought I was an affected, strange person to complain of so trifling a circumstance, in their eyes, — or rather nose.

The Seine is a magnificent river, yet you may imagine the danger of its navigation, when I tell you that the insurance from Havre to Rouen exceeds that between the former port and New York. All this is owing to the shifting banks, that might be very materially removed if *money was laid out* in the undertaking.

I am also told by men who are well aware of its feasibility, that if the Seine was in England, a vessel of two hundred tons would very shortly be brought to Paris, or as soon as British capital could be got to bear on it: and as for Havre, it would be compelled to play "second fiddle" to Rouen, from the latter place being so much nearer the capital and interior, with plenty of water for ships of five hundred or a thousand tons, if government would only make it a channel. But, au contraire, it is now very busily employed erecting a battery to command the harbour on the river side, that will, I

fancy, never be of great avail; as the whole town itself, if attacked vigorously from the sea, would be annihilated, I am told, in six hours. There is nothing to save it from destruction, being exposed to an easy range, without any thing but one or two very insignificant batteries, nearly on a level with the water, to disturb a fleet's manœuvres. The entrance to the port is narrow in the extreme, without any breakwater to permit the name of *harbour* to be used without great injustice. As heavy a sea rolls opposite to the grand quai with the wind at N.N.W., as in the open channel, causing great damage in a gale of wind, as I have before noticed.

The accommodation of a public reading-room, on the same plan as Galignani's at Paris, is greatly called for, as well as an exchange room, there being absolutely neither the one nor the other within this otherwise splendid sea-port town. Strangers have no place of resort in wet weather, but the noisy, smoky, or smoking cafés; and the merchants are compelled to shiver and shake under the arcades, as they make their wintry bargains.

The custom house is also a dirty, shabby building, quite unworthy Hâvre de Grace. This, with many other unsightly objects, fully proves the miserable spirit evinced in public quarters, in withholding the necessary supplies to keep pace with the times. The French cannot bear paying away their l'argent, and submit to many inconveniences rather than part

with it for any purpose, beyond the halo of themselves and immediate families. There is plenty of granite and other stone in France to pave the whole country, if permitted to be used. Yet there is not in the town a square foot of pavement fit for any shoe lighter than a sabot. The streets are filthy in the extreme after rain, in consequence of this much to be lamented economy, as it is impossible to keep the huge boulder stones with the numerous interstices clean (even if it was ever attempted, which it is not,) like a proper foot pavement, as we have in every town and village in England. But till granite leaves its quarry as an amateur pavior, and deposits itself where it is so greatly needed on its own account, there will be none I fear to be seen, unless some great change takes place in the hearts or feet of the authorities. It would be almost pardonable to wish the commissioners of the streets a steady increase in corns, to induce them to improve their ways.

Normandy is, without the least flattery, the most beautiful part of La belle France. It is sufficiently diversified in hill and vale to escape the accusation of the term flatness, with a fine, open, champagne, well-cultivated country, and excellent roads in every direction. In the extreme south, you have mountains, vineyards, and other *curiosities* in scenery; but then the military roads are as straight as a line can draw them, which is not always the case through

Normandy. Here also you never see the coarse millive, and its appropriate farming; or the primitive neglect, in both land and person, that you meet with at every stride in the southern departments. "Beauty unadorned" may be all very well in the poetic imaginary toilette of a half-mad painter, or in the opinion of some love-sick youth or maiden, too ill or idle to attend to their dress or gardening. But I never yet saw a woman (however beautiful she might be,) that curl-papers, a half gartered stocking, or a crumpled frill, ever materially improved; and certainly never viewed a country, however romantic in its features, that cultivation, neatness in fence, road, or long reaches of well ploughed and harrowed soil, with waving crops of evenly sown grain met with occasionally (the oftener the better), did not add to its charms. No one admires the beauties of rock, waterfall, and torrent, if they come in my way at intervals, more than I do; but if not, the neatly arrayed attire and smiling face of our "sweet old friend," with peace and plenty in her hands, and footsteps strewed with flowers, are infinitely preferable to the deshabille she may be found in at times; in which opinion, from the encouragement she gives us to deck her in useful yet becoming taste, we may reasonably believe she herself fully acquiesces. Normandy (like our own beautiful country, cross it where you will,) has all this to boast of—having a consummate toilette,

without being over-dressed, to spoil any of its many natural charms. It is equally favoured with an abundance of romance in its features and history, of which I have given you a slight description, during the excursions I have so much delighted in.

From this beautiful land, numbers of our old English families originally sprung, whose names to this day remain in both countries nearly unchanged. The following Norman Knights who crossed over with the Conqueror, are represented by their direct descendants, without varying a letter in their signatures, as witness, —

Roger Compte de Beaumont,
Le Sieur de Beaufort,
Le Viscomte Neel de Saint Sauveur,
Le Sieur de Tracy,
Le Sieur de Rivier, or Rivers,
Roger de Montgomery,
Roger Marmion,
Le Sieur de Courtnay,
Le Sieur de Saint Clair,
Le Sieur d'Harcourt,
Le Sieur de Tankarville,
Le Sieur de Mandeville.

These, as well as numbers of others, with a very slight alteration in the spelling, are purely French, as well as *now* thoroughly English names. This circumstance, amounting nearly to an instance of common origin, should materially promote the

amicable feeling and good wishes between the two great countries, which I am convinced every right thinking man, both French and English, has sincerely at heart, particularly (if I may be pardoned for boasting of our friendly bias) in England. As Lord Brougham most justly stated, in his excellent letter to his friend the Count in France, "nothing is further from our thoughts than the least ill will or dislike to our French neighbours." The way in which we live amongst them, to an extent amounting to the charge of a serious want of patriotism on our part—(and the *sooner removed* or *lessened* the better), proves the contrary most solidly. Even imaginary benefits (for such they are, be assured) would not induce John Bull to reside with or near any one he disliked; and at home, our most noble lords, baronets, squires, and parsons, hunt, shoot, race, fish, and legislate over poachers, and railway committees; they read a little, occasionally eat, drink, and sleep, without even thinking of France, beyond feeling a reverence for the soil where grows the Lafitte and truffles they so greatly relish and abundantly pay for. Our merchants buy and sell their cotton, indigo, shares, and sugar, in precisely the same spirit; and as for our working and retail folks, they have plenty to do, without troubling their heads beyond the Channel. With the exception of a few pugnacious, fulminating editors, who drink gunpowder tea, and hurl their paper bullets, (not of the

brain) across it, solely for the pleasure of an inky duello, there are not ten people in a county in England, who name the anxious, gay, excitable, smoking, pleasant, chattering country, twice in a twelvemonth.

In France it is very different. England is never lost sight of, for even a post, in what she was, is, will, or may be, in imagined reference to the former country, or any other to which she may think proper to send a steamer, or even an invoice. With the exception also of one journal, every other is constantly pouring the oil of fancied insult, or wilful invidious *self*-comparison, on fuel that is always lighted.

We can but disclaim the least reciprocity in these feelings, as we may do most conscientiously, from having neither time nor inclination to ply incessantly the unsatisfactory, indigestible study of the political zodiac, or horoscope, which is carried to such an extent in this country, with nothing to resent, less to envy, and many sincere good wishes to offer, infinitely in preference to the remotest thought of offence. With this heartfelt sentiment (one I firmly believe all Great Britain, cordially responds to), I shall shoulder my knapsack, and march into La Vendée.

LETTER XXIV.

"THE TURF," DERIVATION OF THE IDIOM.—LOVE OF SPORTING.—SYLVAN CHIVALRY.—THE HIGH-METTLED RACER.—A MODERN CENTAUR.—THE JOCKEY.—GOODWOOD.—EPSOM.—PLEASING DELIRIUM.—NOTES OF PREPARATION.—"THE DERBY DAY."—HARK BACK!—THE DOOMED FAVOURITE.—CROCKEY'S "LAST MAIN AND CHANCE."—THE *COMPOUND* FRACTURE.—SPORTING RESURRECTIONISTS.—IRONY.—AMBIGUOUS DECLARATIONS.—TURF BRIGANDAGE.—THE RETIRED SHOEBLACK.—STRANGE BEDFELLOWS.—THE SPIRIT OF THE TURF.—THE RING.—THE DUKE AND "OLD CRUTCH."—"TOM AND JERRY."—THE IRISH BRIGADE.—CANT PHRASES.—THE DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.—THEIR PATRON SAINT.—A SCENE AT EPSOM.—NEWMARKET HEATH.—YOUR CHESNUT COLT.—THE NAGS AT EXERCISE.—THE TALENT AT WORK.—CONVENIENCE OF "SCAPEGOATS."—FADED SPLENDOUR.—EXTREME USEFULNESS OF RACING.—"THE OLD REGIME."—A CONTRAST, &c.

To complete the "pot-pourri," let me add a little of the fragrant "green grass turf." Surely the verdant, daisy-spangled mead, steeped in the pure, heaven-distilled morning dew, on which fairies dance and disport their fantastic tiny forms, can not but increase the sweet savour of the few dried leaves I have so far gathered for it, and sent you.

The "Turf," over which all nature breathes, and,

alas, too often sighs — over whose waving seas of prairie, decked with the sweetest though simplest flowers, the soaring songster carols his delicious orison to the glorious sun as he gladdens the heart of man, and throws his cheering splendour o'er the scene, must surely improve the bouquet.

This word, in a country famous for calling every thing by its right name, and selected by the sponsors to our language as the new one given to the heir of the ancient course on the Hippodrome, or horse-racing, can, from the purity of its analogy, only mean "Sylvan Chivalry." The fashionable idiomatical phrase of "the Turf" speaks for itself. The arena and noble performers — it is scarely necessary to add, in parenthesis, that I mean the *horses* — I have both attempted to describe. Let me try if I can make up a magic lantern for your mind's eye, that will give you some slight idea of the "Dramatis personæ," who figure in many a thrilling scene in country life, treading the green elastic sward, and brushing the early dew, amidst views that are nature's own: so tranquil, peaceful, so supremely beautiful, are the features of the country wherein the lists are formed for the course of our "Sylvan Chivalry!"

The love of sporting is inherent in a Briton's breast; it scorns the downy bed, gives manliness to the boy, opens and mellows the heart; sincerity, brotherly warmth and heartiness, flow at the very thought,

and are as natural and needful to him as the air he breathes.

The noble, gallant, high-couraged animal who strives in *joyful* emulation to overcome his fellows in the honoured, soul-stirring career before him, is a guarantee for the equal purity of the tournament. Created as he was for the service of man, his powers can only be thoroughly developed when combined with his superior intelligence, or rather intellect.

Together they become a centaur, compared with which he of the fabulous pedigree would stand but a sorry chance.

Human judgment is required to steer, stay, or press the horse's great and willing powers in a race, wherein the knowledge of how long to *wait*, and when to *come*, is indispensable. Thus the accomplished jockey aids his high-mettled steed, and wins the honest race, amidst the cheers of the assembled thousands, whose plaudits, to the ears of an old race-horse, are exquisitely gratifying,— quite as much so as is the hoarse husting's shout to a doubting, would-be county member. All this is most delightful; the glorious scenery, the delicious weather, the splendid nags, the open-hearted sporting Britons, and the healthy excitement of the scene, make it worthy of the gods! Oh Irony, Irony! I am surfeited with thy name. Yet a little while let me sketch on, and leave the shading to the last.

If you would wish to view an arena wherein the

passage of "legs" is annually held—unequalled in scenic grandeur, princely domains, and towering venerable oaks—go to Goodwood. There dwells the honoured, gallant Duke of Richmond, and his most amiable, courteous family, as unassuming as their high rank would naturally make them; which, though not always the case, I regret to say, is eminently so here. It is impossible to conceive more urbane, condescending, pleasing manners, than those of his Grace and Lord March, particularly to their inferiors, with whom they may be safely said to be constantly in contact.

The season for the tourney is "high summer." Darkness seems to have left the world; all is light and sunshine, or delicious balmy twilight. The meeting at Goodwood is perhaps the most brilliant of the many splendid turf-gatherings that take place in England: upwards of thirty thousand pounds, I believe, are given in stakes alone; to contend for many of which you may see half the peerage in the pig-skin. The race-course is in the park: your very admittance is on sufferance, though the noble owner is only too happy to see all, from his brother duke to honest Giles, who has left his "spade and flail."

The view as you ride through the park is grand in the extreme. It is almost interminable in beauty and variety. Hills, bluffs, grassy slopes, extensive verdant vales, with forests of noble wood, and, far away the Hampshire Wolds and Isle of Wight com-

plete the glorious prospect. Crowds of gay, laughing country folks, in their best attire, in waggons, carts, or trudging merrily on foot, appear crossing from all parts of the country, making for the race-course; where refreshment-tents, marquees, music, conjurors, trainers, jockies, parading horses, the whole house of lords and *commons*, compose the sporting "olla podrida." The only fault is, in there being *too much* racing: the bell is incessantly tolling; from noon till long past a proper dinner-time, the order is "boot and saddle," leaving a weary, hollow-bellied pilgrimage to your quarters before you can make that essential hour available. Otherwise a trip to Goodwood is well worthy to be accounted a "white stone" in any man's existence.

Now for Epsom! (though it precedes the meeting I have described). Spring has scarcely left us; the lilac is in bloom, the hedges have put forth their earliest bud to grace the "saintly congress" of the dramatis personæ of the "Turf." A pleasing infectious madness seems to reign over Babylon, from the sceptre to the broomstick; each are severally forsaken for the time by both queen and dustman.

All men alike seem smitten by the mania. The secretary for the colonies, in high parliament assembled, once read to the illustrious sages how that the "clerk of the *course*" (instead of *court*) would instantly attend them; showing how his noble thoughts were wandering from Saint Stephen's to Meckleham

Downs ; a dignitary of. the Church, who wears a shovel hat, and honourable as well as right reverend to his name, gave out the collect for the day as "the Sunday before the Derby," causing every one to look to their "books" with anxious haste. Every one is "lively as a blacking-brush," (as Jonathan yankic-phrases, being on the "qui vive"); beds are a guinea each, because no one can sleep a wink — all literally wallow in delirium. Everywhere echoes the note of preparation, — North, South, East, and West pours its wholesale streams to London.

Now mercenary "Extra" reigns supreme. Trains, coaches, robbers, compound fractures, and charges are "extra," and extraordinary. Vans with horses, whose fates have long since been sealed in private conclave, are carefully steamed up to town, and gazetted as "arrived," springing twenty points, to their credit, in no time,—*wretches that could not walk the distance.*

What a row in the kitchen! what carnage in the shambles! Stacks of capons, flocks and herds of lambs, droves of fatted beeves, and cotes of pigeons, are massacred and prepared for Epsom; icebergs are sent to the downs; every liquid, from popping champagne to fizzing and foaming Barclay and Perkins, is taken in tuns, cases, and hampers, by thousands; rivers of water are conveyed to the high and dusty scene, where every want of man seems destined to a galloping consumption; carriages are loaded with

wine, and wit, and beauty: the whole world is bent upon a gorge, to accomplish which, many have prepared and saved for a whole year, and quite as many have done neither one nor the other for even a day, though equally or more in need of it.

It is the "Derby Day!" when every other concern or thought is either postponed or banished "sine die." There may, perhaps, be one man left at the Bank of England; but all the tailors have deserted "Threadneedle" Street: even Moses has shut his shop. Not a hackney-coach is to be seen on the numerous stands, nor a "bull" or "bear" to be found near the Exchange: even the "lame ducks" have waddled away and joined the throng, hastening, amidst shoals of dust, to the field of action. Hark back! a little.—The Craven and first Spring Meetings at Newmarket have sufficed, with the latter part of the old year's performance, to place a horse in the enviable position of "first favourite for the Derby." He has run through, and won, all his engagements in so easy and straightforward a manner, "giving weight," to respectable performers, that it makes the great race appear "quite a certainty." He won the "Criterion" (one of the most trying courses it is possible to imagine for a two-year old) in a perfect canter: never was there so easy a victory. The make, courage, temper, and action of this horse were such as I seldom saw excelled: he was docility itself; and would let the trainer's little grandchild play

about his heels as he thought proper. His owner was one of those extraordinary instances of mankind, who with scarcely the advantage of a blanket to cover him when he was born, or a penny, or knowledge of the alphabet, to commence life with, yet succeeded in amassing a splendid fortune, in the sequel, and in dying, in a palace, of the incurable cancer of the mind—anxiety. He was a man who, like the ancient merchants on the "Rialto," dealt in "gold and ivory" to a large extent, after he had forsaken the lucrative fish-stall, to become a fisher of men, where shoals of flat fish still came greedily to his net. His elephants' teeth and painted pasteboard brought ducats and post-obits to overflowing. As poor Theodore Hook wrote over the entrance to his supper-room — "He filled the hungry with good things, but the rich he *always* sent empty away." "Hell," in fact, smiled on him! till he bred a horse *good* enough to win the "Criterion" (*and the Derby*). Then the old dice-merchant's hours were numbered! — his nerves could not stand the torturing "hazard of the die;" he withered away, without the least exaggeration, quite perceptibly. Treachery surrounded him on every side; he received dark hints, advice, and caution, by every post, respecting the "doomed favourite" he wanted the resolution, or the power, to save.

I need not say that the horse was *poisoned,* after a long unwearied attempt at breaking him down, his owner receiving the account of his defeat on his very

death-bed — a sporting jury bringing in their verdict, "Died of a favourite ——."

To make all perfectly safe, the night before the Derby, the sentries were doubled *outside* the stable; "locks, bolts, and bars" duly secured, and the jockey, who was to ride the favourite, locked up *singly* with him! When the key was turned upon this worthy, the noble horse was in complete health, with a skin like satin, and muscles of iron. On making his appearance on the downs the next morning, his coat stood in fright; he looked blue and shivery, and was beaten by animals he could have readily distanced, had not villany marked him for her own!

Never was there such a nest of robbers broken up, as in that race. There were three or four wires to the atrocious plot, all of which broke, and ruined the conspirators. One horse, that was bred in Germany, and said, with much *untruth*, to be four years old, (his owner saying, "vot lies they told in England, as he vas more dan *six!*") had his leg broken in the race, by a four-legged and *yeared* confederate, that won it, and was deprived of the stakes afterwards, by the decision of a court of justice. The sacrificed veteran in the race was buried "on the sly," at midnight, and afterwards disinterred by some sporting resurrectionists, who thought to get a look in his mouth, and so set the matter (like the poor dead brute) at rest. But the old trainer had been too

many for them, having taken away his lower jaw, before consigning him to "that bourne, whence no traveller returns." The row this event caused baffles description, though it amply illustrates a little of the "chivalry of the turf" that I so ironically alluded to at starting. *Chivalry!* of *horse racing!* could irony go further? Look for liberality in a Jew, cleanliness in a leper, hatred of vegetables in a tailor, or truth in O'Connell — but look not for anything but premeditated chicanery on the "turf," when any transaction on it is biassed by money — it is its very keystone and rallying point.

When some unprincipled deceiver, pretending to philosophy, said, "words were given a man to enable him to disguise his thoughts," he must have had a declaration to make respecting his horse starting for the "Cambridgeshire," or, what is much worse, some ambiguous deceptive trap to lay, baiting it with the once honoured, irreproachable guarantee of an English gentleman's word; or even *hint*, which was generally as tantamount to his intentions, as future events would possibly permit him to act, and of more intrinsic safety to his hearers than many a heavily stamped bond. *He* scorned the villanous theory as became an honest man; and if, at times, he disguised his thoughts, as every prudent one would do, in self-defence, when "false colours" are hoisted at every peak, he did it by casting over them the dignified, and graceful mantle of "silence," and not by decking

them in the *gratuitous* garb of turf brigandage and deceit.

He, in whose veins flowed the same blood that was probably shed at Agincourt or Cressy, *could* not have coolly asked for a reporter to a premeditated snare in speech. What think you of a man of this honourable lineage, publicly stating to a full house of sporting brethren that he cautioned them as a friend, against backing a horse he had in a particular race, close at hand, as he had the greatest doubts of his starting, from reasons only known to himself, begging, at the same time, it might be put into black and white, *pro bono publico!* when he knew in his heart, under high heaven, he was giving utterance to that which he had not the remotest *wish, belief,* or *idea* of seeing confirmed, in order that his horse (fit to run for an infinitely greater value than his own life) might be sent back in the odds his emissaries were so greedily accepting. Bah! the "order of gentlemen" should blush for the tarnish it suffers under such a false and recreant representative. The horse, instead of not starting, *won in a canter!* those who had backed him being reasonably *alarmed* at the words they heard, thinking every reliance might be placed on the hint, or rather, assertion of a man who *should* be so far above suspicion, and who came so far out of his way to give it them. These "laid off their money" (as it is called), and lost considerably.

I am shading the sketch with the very *lightest*

hand, though the daisy-spangled idiomatic turf cannot boast much of *chivalry*, you will allow.

Do you see a man with *animal* stamped on his plebeian features, whose bull neck and beetling brow are so very conspicuous, even amongst his ill-favoured tribe, that you *cannot* mistake him? You may hear his cackling, hyena laugh, as in coarse familiarity he is addressing that refined, high-bred, elegant-looking fellow in the blue frock-coat and buckskin trousers. What a sad scene it is! The vulgar, round-shouldered, impudent varlet, once pulled the forelock of his bullet head, as you gave him the guerdon for only half polishing your shoes, in a very second-rate hotel. Yet now he whispers his turf-secret with hot and noxious breath into the small aristocratic ear of his companion, whose calm reflective eye and noble air you would think an earnest of "better things," and scarcely able to disguise so well the innate loathing that he feels and only suffers for the love of sport! Say rather *money*, that will reconcile him, even to take the shoeblack to his bed. They work together, though in different spheres; one over the richly-laden board as he sips his claret and "books his friend!" in thousands, (giving him the *benefit of the whisper*), whilst the ruffian drinks his gin and gets "a tenner." Alas, alas, this is a terrible state of things! when gunpowder would be burnt and paces measured were you to hint at the word "honour," with the shadow of a

shade of doubt. The many dark pages that could be written, to illustrate the spirit of the turf would require an "era" alone to print. The numerous handicaps planned and run in *malice prepense* — some showing the greatest *patience* in the performers to "abide their time." The keeping horses in the betting, through the "bonneting" of the owners when all had probably been *mentally* scratched in a friendly arrangement, months before the race, though, no doubt brought to the very posts before the public announcement would be made that they were so. The laying on a "double event," when one of them remains in the bettor's power, having his victim bound in the adamantine chain of certain and inextricable loss. These, and numbers of other high-bred malpractices, are counteracted and retorted upon by the "legs" and "carnivora," by every satanic device and fertile thought. At times, by negociation with the jockey, the diplomatic envoy being provided with a change of complexion, hair, clothes, and even voice, the *half* of a bank of England note (occasionally for a thousand pounds) with a little packet of deadly enervating powder, in case of need, to stop the gallant horse, if not to ruin his constitution for life.

"The ring" is another specimen of English idiom that a foreigner, looking at the pure virgin signet on his finger for explanation, would be grievously puzzled in tracing anything like a meaning or analogy. The only one that I can see between them, is that

the gold of the former is a particle of the deeply-coveted imaginary mine, that is in fact the nucleus round which the sporting sons of mammon, yell and scuffle. For they form no *ring* in the stormy debates they hold in their struggles for its attainment. It requires the thews and sinews as well as the ribs, of a Murcian bull, to endure even a quarter of an hour's pressure in the immense throng that gathers on the eve or morn of any great event, when confusion reigns confounded. They roar and scream and smoke altogether and incessantly. Tables, chairs, the very chimney-piece and chandeliers are mounted when the "bourse" is under-cover, and pumps, window-sills, and good-tempered fellows' shoulders, when it is formed outside the den, to afford the keen, industrious sportsman a better aim in "bringing down his man." "The ring" means in fact the regular betting men by profession, the frequenters of races, who attend them as a trade. These arrive at the various country towns, many, as I have said, situated in the most lovely, tranquil, rural scenery in the world, and astonish the little place once a-year, completely "out of its propriety." They come from every quarter of the compass, though the greater proportion are Babylonians and Lancastrians, and instantly form what they call a "ring," and so commence the tumultuous orgy for the week. It would be a somewhat difficult task to reconcile an impartial, uninterested observer with the scene before him, and the code he had heard so boasted of as regulating English society. It is

impossible to conceive anything more free from the usual barriers that separate men in their station, habits, acquirements or susceptibilities than a congress of the sporting world exhibits in one of these meetings. See the princely duke dressed in the very highest recherché costume, strolling languidly down the main street, a picture of manly elegance, accosted by a figure rejoicing in an equal share of symmetry, with a coat thrown over a high-backed chair or clothes' post, leaning on a trusty crutch, probably poking his tusks with a large pocket knife or cracking a walnut, half a hundred of which he has in his pocket. This is one of the dignitaries of "the ring," whose dialect and manners leave the famed Tim Bobbin or a Lancashire delver far behind in purity.

The noble, good-natured duke, throwing one arm behind his back, and a condescending smile over his handsome countenance, receives the old square-built, shapeless gentleman, who is eating his desert with the urbanity that is his second nature. "Well, Mr. ——, what's to win to-day? you are quite *au fait* in these things, and a perfect treasure to such a novice as myself. Pray let me have the benefit of your excellent advice, for I must, as usual, back something for an odd hundred, just by way of having an interest."

"Whoy, your grace, t'Crack winna win, moind *that, when it's over.* The Talent go on *laying*, they wull na be stall'd off, and I should think they han him just as safe as if he wor boil'd." The duke

raises his eyebrows and shoulders, laughing good-humouredly, though he hardly understands a word of the classic answer, whilst the old sporting cripple cracks another walnut with his tusks, and winks knowingly at him.

Now a little good-looking, bustling gentleman, whose hair is turned prematurely gray, is joined by a slender, sleepless, ferret-eyed friend, who casts a furtive glance or two, whispers some short though deeply interesting sentence, when they separate and worm themselves into "the ring," on different sides, though with precisely the same object — (open your mouth only, and try them). These are two dangerous blades, being sufficiently double-edged, to meet you over the damask, after having done a little stable-talk with your servant, and agreed to lay out his "pony" or five hundred, if the thing is *very* good. The Irish division are in great force to-day, and absolutely suffocate you with thousands. The potato panic or "repale" are as nothing to the sensation they have made in the market. The brogue, cut-and-thrust looks, as well as the sonorous voices of some of these terrible fellows (particularly after a slice of luck), strike terror into the ring, and are at any time better than ten points to a horse's position, compared to the tame support a southern gives his animal.

As in the mysteries of Paris and London, the language of "the ring" employs many cant phrases to denote the various incidents or peculiarities of the

craft; for instance, the art of effecting a horse's perfect *salvation* by bribery, poison, laming, or other treachery, is called "nobbling," and the little fat, low-bred, impertinent varlet, you see talking to even a more vulgar looking fellow with half an acre of plebeian features joined to the most atrocious, obtrusive manners, is called "*the* nobbler" from the "gift" he has that way.

All "the ring," with about two or three exceptions, are without the least pretension to the appellation of gentlemen. Professional usurers, retired pugilists, billiard markers, broken-up or down hellites, swaggering pomatumed adventurers, Jews and lackeys, all dating from the stews, with the manners of the Piccadilly saloon or upper boxes, and hearts of condors, are let loose upon the little country town: mixed with these are one or two overbearing city traders of low origin and mien, who combine "turf" with their other speculations, making "double entry" extremely profitable. Some few young spirited fellows of birth and education, to whom, alas! such excitement has become almost necessary diet, and, as I have said before, two or three as gentlemanly, honourable, aye, and amiable men as you can find in a day's march. These last are truly like my most excellent grandmother's teeth, being "few and *very far* between," and are in society at times, that I sincerely wish them well out of. The great final muster of "the people" in town before the race "comes off" is a

glorious banquet, at which the "father of all lies" presides, and wags his tail with exquisite satisfaction; his offspring striving to gratify his paternal pride, outdo even their honoured sire in the zeal and talent they display in "bonneting," "crabbing," and "putting about" their plausible though deadly rumours; — all three terms being taken from the dictionary published under the patronage of the ring. Every one but this initiated brood is bewildered in the intricate maze of falsehood that surrounds him, where verily, verily, all is robbery.

But the chicken-pie eating cocknies and thousands of smiling lads and lasses, who ride in the moving arbours into which they have made their huge lumbering waggons, by laburnums, lilacs, and royal oak, have no hand in the plunder, and deserve our hearty good wishes for their enjoyment in the long-looked for annual outing. The roads leading to the downs are filled nearly from daylight by countless swarms of people, all heading to the trysting place, and form indeed an extraordinary scene and panorama.

Round a post placed on the highest ridge of the mighty hive or human ant hill, scream the "dramatis personæ" of the turf. One above all threatening to lay against "the crack," may be heard from lungs to which rude Boreas or a raging bison would be considered weak and dulcet — he will lay against "Eringo!" he will will lay against the Devil!

The bull-necked gentleman, with others of his clan,

yell their pecuniary anathemas against everything that has a name — all scream and bawl together, rending the air with their deafening shouts to "get on," or "off" as they willingly would to save themselves — the bubble having nearly burst, and all but a choice few "put into the hole" (as picking a man's pocket is termed in ring phraseology). At length the last ten pound note is got out of it, the horses are paraded, the flag is dropped — "they're off!" is repeated by twenty thousand tongues, when sailing up the steep ascent of the Derby course, like a moving tulip-bed, five-and-thirty gallant steeds strive, *apparently*, for the splendid prize, when not a moiety in reality have even their owners' wishes to be placed — they being so kind-hearted, as to give way to their more anxious brethren in the race, and as "virtue is its own reward," they seldom lose by their philanthropy.

With the exception of bottles being empty and the people full, some being ruined and others made, all return as they came. A few panels, heads and knees may be broken in the *mêlée*, but in the main, the "bears," "bulls," "lame ducks," tailors, lords, legs, cits, and carnivora all get back to their respective lairs, more or less with aching heads or hearts, when everything settles into its usual routine, till the coming year brings its favourite, its villany, and chicken-pies, with the usual orgy on the downs.

No one who has ever trod or gallopped over New-

market Heath, and inhaled the pure, delicious breeze, that sweeps over its expansive, open features, in the "first Spring" or Autumn meetings, need be surprised at men loving racing. If health and buoyant spirits are any boon, try the bracing atmosphere of "the heath," it would create an appetite under the very ribs of death, and beats *all* the 'opathies in a canter.

The foal that your favourite old mare produced you nearly three years ago, is now as fine a colt "as ever looked through a bridle." You have watched his earliest gambols in the paddock, that with the rustic shed in which he was dropped, so ornamentally flanks your country dwelling, have seen him backed and broke at home, scarcely having lost sight of him a day.

When rising two, you sent him to that best of trainers after all (without the remotest wish to detract from the merits of many very able men, John Scott), to be duly prepared for "the two thousand guineas," and the Derby. And be assured, well will he do his duty to your horse; if man can make him fit and finish his education, he will do it. Your colt is now rather over fifteen three, of a dark chesnut colour, has fine sloping shoulders, immense arms and gaskins, with powerful drooping quarters, a splendid back and head, with ample length, and the "sweetest temper in the stable." He has had "a taste" besides, that more than satisfied yourself, and the accomplished judge who rode him in the trial,

Bill Scott, of pious memory. Who *could* remain in bed, when this animal that you have bred and fed, and caressed, for more than thirty months, is going to take a gallop with the great northern trainer's team, of fully fifty horses? The Downs may have charms, but *down* has none for you: your very dreams have had you in the saddle all night, and conclude by landing you in an imaginary jump over some frightful yawning gulf, smack on the floor of your "loose box"—any thing but "thrown out,"—except your bed, you open your casement and holloa for your hack, as you scrape your grizzly chin; and ere the dews have risen from the short and springy turf, you rattle over it to join the nags at exercise. A dozen pass you in their clothes, taking a bursting gallop, snorting through the fine wold air, and making the ground quake with their bounding hoofs.

Your colt is complimented by having the lead in the string walking in the hollow, with a lad upon him, as neat as a young Brummel in his attire, who sits as if he was in a chair, kicking the good-tempered sluggish animal harmlessly with both his heels to drive him in his walk. Now he takes a spin of at least four miles, when he requires little *driving*, be assured, but pulls the lad double in his resolute lengthy stride. See him anon win the two thousand, "in a trot," beating a field of fifteen or twenty horses, and then his name in "honoured print," with

three to one against him for the Derby, with "*taken freely*" added, in ominous italics.

Without some guardian angel (who sincerely loves the sport) sleeps in the corn-bin, draws his water, feeds and plates him, you may as well wish your noble colt had ne'er been foaled, as see the price he figures at. He is to pay for all the yearly wants of scores of the "*dramatis personæ*," and *must* be made safe, as they never back horses (except to lose), and cannot refrain from "potting" him, at the price.

Now comes the "casting of the bullet," to which the scene in Der Freischutz was angelic simplicity. A conclave of the "talent," as they call themselves, meet to concoct the doom of your beautiful nag. There is the head conspirator, who might be under ground, so invisibly he works and moves the hellish machinery. His satellites and coadjutors feel rather a pride and relish in the fiendish parts allotted them, and go about their business with fierce effrontery. Their secret society has every thing in its power to gain their ends, from a member in the stable, or villanously bribed blacksmith, to the rascally compounder of the deadly powder.

Of course the pivot upon which all this turns, is *money*. All must be paid; and when you consider the claims to be satisfied, after such a case of poisoning as I have described — when the owner of the horse died from the mental agony he could no longer suffer — you may judge of the ramifications necessary

to get the sum together. *That* was most effectually managed, indeed, to a immense amount; yet the all-powerful Jockey Club dismissed the case, with a mellifluous caution to the "gentlemen!" and a sentence of banishment on two of the low "small fry," (one of them the convicted jockey,) who, though two as unmitigated villains as ever looked through a grating, scarcely got a shilling in the pound of the plunder that flowed into the coffers of not a few of the "personæ." Their share was about equal to Mr. Beaumont Smith's, in the *hushed-up* exchequer bill robbery: nevertheless, *he* may, or *may not* be, in the far-distant land of botanists; whilst the "first-rates" in the "untoward affair" have still their roving commissions.

Hang the thing! I cannot keep from shading my sketch: as a faithful depicter, I must do so, or you lose the likeness in the flattery; and grieved am I to say the background is not half so dark as needed for the connoisseur to recognise it.

Racing has long been fading in the magnificence, that was wont to be seen on its arena. The equipages that once met the eye on the "Ledger day" at Doncaster might have defied all Europe to produce any thing approaching their splendour and good taste. Coaches and six, with powdered outriders in green and gold and other gorgeous liveries, with holsters at their saddle-bows, frequently with "led horses" for their master or his guests to mount at

will, were to be seen making for the course, intermingled with numberless "fours-in-hand" landaus, phaetons, and chariots, all superbly horsed, with perhaps the most *distingué* set-out in our time, the "dashing curricle," that seems now to have entirely gone out of fashion.

The county families met to pass a week together, to race, and dine, and dance; when the very sun was dazzled by the blaze of beauty that put his rays completely into shade, till the meeting ended. All this is over, it is almost safe to say, never to return: yet a canter over Mickleham Downs, Langton Wold, or Newmarket Heath, is exquisitely gratifying if you can keep your horse (if you have one) at any figure above thirty to one (if you wish him to *win*). If you have no nag, and do not bet beyond an amusing trifle, it is impossible to name any thing equal to the scene of health, interest, and beneficial excitement you will meet with on them. The immense circulation of money amongst all classes (without allusion to betting), the encouragement for breeding, the aid to agriculture in the great consumption of its produce at the highest prices, the affording of a healthy natural sport to all alike, and a welcome annual assistance to many a poor widow who lets her clean little dwelling for the week, — all these proceed from racing, and justly entitle it to put forth no small claim to the merit of extreme usefulness, if not of philanthropy.

These were the original ends which the noble sport was intended by our less speculative ancestors to serve, and they still constitute the aim of such honoured patrons as the Marquis of Exeter, Lord Eglinton (whose straightforward, chivalrous conduct on several occasions should never be forgotten)— and, alas! very, very few such noble, true, and genuine sportsmen. The amount of public money, in addition to the stakes subscribed to by the owners of horses and others, and submitted to competition in Great Britain, in a twelvemonth's racing, is enormous, and an ample remuneration, one would think, for all who contend for it as gentlemen, whose position and resources make the result to be supposed only an agreeable contingency. And so it would be, there is no doubt, had not the "Turf," like railway and every other fashionable scheme in England, been overdoffe to a cinder; or, in phraseology more apropos to the former, been trodden into mud and mire, leaving not a blade of the verdant beauty that once adorned it. Instead of the jolly open-hearted muster of the "old regime," who, in their unrivalled buckskin breeches, buff waistcoats, and refulgent boots, were seen treading the heath, or downs, and running their horses against each other in honour and good will, we have the "*dramatis personæ*" I have so faintly attempted to pourtray.

The ancient king-and-country loving gentry of

about "Smolensko's" time had manners probably a shade rougher, yet more courtly in reality, more simple, yet dignified, than those in the same caste who have succeeded them, with traits of manly gallantry, hatred of meanness, and profuse, though well-dispensed liberality, that may still be left amongst us, but are very seldom seen. The buckskin breeches and mahogany tops, have departed, without leaving, at all events, a *perfect* specimen of the Colonel King of other days behind, who almost out-Brummel'd Brummel in his fastidious toilet; — the Colonel was so elegantly thin, and exquisitely "got up," in leather, powder, broad-cloth, and fine linen, with an air of the very highest fashion, and manners just courteously disputing the polish with his boots.

How strange is the complete and total change that comes over a whole nation, in outward signs scarcely leaving a trace behind, that our grandsires could recognise as "auld acquaintance," if they were permitted to take a ghostly promenade amongst us. The Colonel's costume, added to his aristocratic, high-bred figure, step, and features, is a trifle altered in the *tout ensemble* of a West-end sporting Condor, or in the prevailing fashion of "Young London." It will be quite as prudent not to open the wardrobe, or attempt the physiognomist, in helping you to the contrast; these things, from satin waistcoats in a morning, to snub noses having the call of aquilines, being entirely a matter of taste, and too much in

favour at present to admit of any thing but the most docile allusion. These outward charms grace the professional turfites pre-eminently, to which a profusion of jewellery, greasy locks, and shining half-guinea silk hats add a corresponding lustre. These have "cut-in" to aid the interest of the scene, within the last twenty years, to an extent that has made the paltry hundred-and-fifty-thousand annually collected, and contended for on the turf, an item too contemptible to bestow a thought on. "Books" for two, five, ten, and twenty thousand pounds, are common as Penny Magazines. New York, The Cape, Paris, Calcutta, as well as every town in Great Britain, has its speculators on our great races; whilst every hotel, billiard-room, or public-house has its lottery on the result, from a thousand pounds to twenty shillings. The chance and apparently hopeless hits in some of which, leave Bish, Aladdin, and all ancient history far behind in the frolicksome vagaries they display.

The results of many races give even the law the "go by" in the glorious uncertainty they so forcibly illustrate; some have been exquisitely ridiculous. I remember one in particular, that caused the greatest merriment at Chester. There was a good stake, in one of the races, at that very pleasant meeting, that required three horses to contend for it, to make the money available. Two horses were ready, whose owners agreed to divide, and to pay the

stake of a third, giving *his* owner a bonus at the same time to start his horse (some animal they thought nothing of), to fulfil the necessary conditions. Away they went, one of the confederates (old "Zohrab") very soon pulling up, leaving his coadjutor (Abraham Newland) to canter in, and receive the money, as duly intended and arranged; when, lo, and behold! the despised brute, running on velvet, collared him at the distance, ran as game as a bulldog, stride for stride, and *beat* him on the post amidst the laughter and amusement of all acquainted with the circumstances. The hearts (!) of most betting men are fossilised to petrifaction; or at least the callous indifference they display on any accident, however melancholy, occurring before their eyes, would naturally lead one to suspect so. I know one man, who, on seeing three or four of the favourites in a steeple-chase rolling in a deadly *mêlée*, with their riders, in a deep and dangerous ditch, fervently thanked God he was *against them all!* and another, who on being asked if he thought Tawell would be executed or not? replied, "he only wished he could find any one who would *back the field!* as he was making a little book on a few hanging matches, two of which had come off in his favour."

The grief these men feel on the death of a brother turfite, should he chance to have any claim on the survivors, is *touching* in the extreme. If they had messed together for twenty years, a balance of a

"pony" would reconcile the afflicted mourner, and effectually dry his eyes and throat.

Old John Day tells a capital *joke*, of once being victimised by "gentlemen jocks," at Bath. In a field of a dozen horses, he had one that he *knew* to be so wretchedly bad, that he took the liberty of laying the odds to a fifty pound note against him, at fifteen to one. It seems the Jocks had breakfasted together, and compared books, (as became brethren of some "Union Club,") which showed that all the "cream" depended upon honest John's horse coming in first, a result they *of course* readily accomplished, being men of "nous" and education, one bolting at the first favourable opportunity with three or four after him; some fell off, others "pull'd" till the self "potted" Danebury nag came in nearly by himself, every one profusely congratulating his owner, who, besides the fifteen fifties, had the "police to pay for the meeting," and ten dozen of champagne to the club, for winning. Honest John's countenance, when seeing his "gentleman jock" weighed, must have been rather a legible index, and deeply instructive.

If you can find the least instruction or amusement in the canter I have led you over "the Turf," I shall be greatly delighted, I assure you.

LETTER XXV.

"ENCORE!" — RUMOUR. — RACING REPORTS AND ANXIETY. — "TOUTS." — A DIALOGUE AT MICKLEHAM. — MEN ABOUT TOWN. — THE REVEREND GINGER BRUMMELL. — A SCENE AT LIMMER'S. — MESSRS. O'FAY, SIR XENOPHON SUNFLOWER, AND "HANDSOME JACK." — "FATTY." — SCENE AT YORK. — SPARLING AND HIS UNCLE. — THE "CORNER." — AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN. — GOOD LOOKS. — A PRETTY AMERICAN WOMAN'S OPINION. — SCENE AT TATTERSALL'S. — HONOURABLE CONDUCT IN LORD EGLINTON. — PROPHECY. — THE DEADLY CLIQUE. — SPORTING VAMPIRES.

THEY say rumour has a thousand tongues — she has more than were ever salted since the days of "Ham," whether of ox, buffalo, reindeer or horse, in the immediate week or so preceding "the Derby." They wag faster and more furious than the hyson and scandal-scalded tip of even Mrs. Harris herself, and have as much truth in them as you might look for in an Algerine dispatch, or a dicer's oath.

The camelion is a fixture in colour, compared to the versatility of racing reports as the day approaches, when the varied scenes and dialogues in both town and country become amusing in the extreme.

Anxiety wields her iron sceptre over her abject dependents with a ruthless sway; Morphine cannot

secure them an instant's perfect rest; their dreams are of "odds and ends" *on* their favourites, and *of* their hopes. Visions of the race with Simmy (excellent, honest little fellow!) pulling double at the corner, taking up the running at the cords, and winning by three clear lengths, gladden their restless slumbers. The rustling angelic crackle of new brilliant tissue paper, with those mystic, sable, soul-enchanting figures, emblazoned on it in "sums," solaces their sleeping tympanum, to which an Æolian harp is discord.

Awake! shave, descend. Your nag is broken down in a gallop the day before: it is "the Lord Mayor's thigh to a darning needle" against him (with "no takers"): but then you have another chance in "the favourite," being lucky enough not to have made him a loser. Let us see how that may serve you from public opinion.

"Well, Jim," said one of those wandering, lie-distributing, indefatigable fellows, called, in ring parlance, a "Tout," a kind of professional stable spy, maintained by the credulity of the soft-hearted spoon-bill tribe of sportsmen. These fellows have been known to bury themselves in a hole, with a sod for a hat, with barely room for their eyes, for hours together, to get a glimpse of a string of horses, so covered with clothing, that the trainer himself has to ask which is the crack? giving the worthy in the hole a very good chance, as you will admit, to form an

opinion for his correspondent, particularly when very probably the last in the trial shall be first in the race, *when the weights are altered* as they *could* tell you at Malton.

However, I chanced to overhear two of these turf quacks do a bit of dialogue together under my window, in a sweet little village in Surrey, "once upon a time," as the stories say, that amused me excessively. The speaker was a sturdy ruffian from the North, with the true hang dog, unceremonious look of a "tout," with the bullying impudence becoming his calling; his accent was of the pure Tyke family, issuing from lungs equally roughened by a protracted cold and Geneva.

His comrade was a thorough Londoner,—a regular "Chick-lane cove,"—flash, slang, with some *little* assurance, were marked on his index, so legibly that you might run, and read. He was a "swell" too, having evidently found out the emporium where repose, or dangle the cast-off garments of Fullar Craven—those were *the* gaiters, *the* bandanna, *the* waistcoat, hat and all. The delicious cockney dialect was in glorious keeping.

"Well, Jim," said the Yorkshireman, "here's the hawful day a gean;"—"blow me, if it does'nt look just like nob'ut a week sin you and me had to morris after 't Lancelot crab," when Bill rode his hos's heard clean off. "Wot *Will* win does the think? we are got a tidy nag this time, I can tell thee."

"Vy, Jack," said the amiable Jim, "it all depends. If the Black Man is 'on,' it's a good thing, and I shall go a couple more on him; but if *not*"—(here he chucked his hands and elbows up sharp, as a coachman would pull up his wheelers)—"vy, he'll put the drag on, that's all."

"Whoy, Jim, it's not i' natur for a man to ram his hos in first, if it does him no good, and may-be harm; but them swells have got a dollop on, and always puts Bill on, at the last, on good terms,—if he is na beforehand, which you may depend he does na often miss."

"Strike me blind, Jack; if *I* don't think so," replied Jim; "but them swells is sich gallows rogues, there is no chance for honest coves like you and me; they puts one of their M. P.'s to work the thing in the house—another they plants at Limmer's; they've three or four working the oracle at Tatt's, and no mortal man can diskiver their interior designs. They telegraphs, and lays the twigs that a sparrow can't hop over them without 'napping it.' They be too cunning by half, being trained to it, as a man may say, from their very infancy, when they finishes at college, and comes out regular nummers."

"That they knows a dodge or two, *shall* be right," said Jack, "though there is some real good fellows among 'em, arter all. I know we have got some real jannack chaps in Yorkshire wot will pull out ony time for me, or let me stand a foiver. There's that

there Drum-and-rig is a fizzer, and will never see a poor devil stumped. Mester Jacques, and black Bill his-sen, is just about as good as gold. Will you wet, Jim? *I* stand Sam."

"With all his heart," said the polite Jim, after hoisting up the 'Craven's' a trifle, and insinuating a bit of lady's twist under his tongue. * *

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"Well, Ginger," said a nice-looking little fellow—much more so than he will prove, if you know him,—a sanguine-complexioned gentleman, who, though with nothing sinister in his looks, has a touch of it in his quarters, whereof he boasts more than those who have had what are called honest parents. To him it is no reproach to ask the question put to the recruit in the guard room, "I say, swaddy, how old were you when your mother was married?" he will get over all this, and much more, without a ruffle. With a manner apparently as hearty as Squire Weston, he has a heart quite as insincere as Iago. This is a little, newsy, ear-wigging man about town, of the epicene or doubtful order; he will try to worm into a country acquaintance for the Derby week, and be struck with ophthalmia at the settling. A man without sufficient station to be independent in his attentions, and fearful in the extreme of the paint being rubbed off him by a casual graze.

Very different is the man he has just addressed.

This fellow, though not entered in the Red Book, is in everything a gentleman: natural—always the same,—vif—as "a polished razor keen," with a vocabulary to be envied by peer and cabman. Nothing can equal his fastidious slang, and quiet cut-and-thrust table talk. In dress he is an exact specimen of a reverend Ginger Brummel; he is often taken for a parson, in his unique cut of black, with white "choker," put on as if it was cut out of the same block. He is a *shaving man*, and just as clean as a scraped carrot, or new made pin, in reality. He has ridden up to town on his matchless pony, and of course is now at Limmer's, where sits the clique that settles the fate of Derbies, as Peel does the farmers (if they *can*).

There is every size of man, from "the heavy loss to the British service"—as good a fellow as ever snored—to the little twitching Milesian M. P.; hairy colonels, swipy parsons, leggy lords, ringletted unknowns, and befrogged enamelled Jews, form the house of assembly. Lord Neddy in the chair.

"Well, Ginger," said the anxious hearty-looking little gentleman; "seen the nags, I suppose? How's the crack? Is he *dead* or *not?* for we had him so here last night; demme, if three or four men did not write their books full from seven to one, to six to four, without being tired."

"Dead or not," said Ginger, "I saw him go like a cricket-ball this morning—I'll take five hundred to

two I name the winner, though no admirer of favourites (except when a lady's in the case, — Wo ho! Nelly!) I *can* have nothing but the crack this time."

"What a dem'd ass I was to hedge at six to one," drawled out a vacant-looking hero, sitting on the table drumming the leaf with his heels, — "That cursed fellow, Sunflower, is always put on by George Danson to give the ring the *coup de grace* and has no more compunction than a guillotine."

"Get in with 'the lads' my suffering friend," said Ginger, "if you would have the 'right office' — the merry men are the only tutors, believe me, to be depended on, — and though some of the talent have potted this horse — the rest know it's *all over*, and are working like blacks in a diamond mine to get out, — the prescription to nobble him has entirely failed, and I tell you all, most worthy citizens, that 'Cotherstone' will go in by himself! — *I*, Ginger O'Fay, — mark me! *I* have said it."

"It's a pity your mother had not twins of you Ginger," said Handsome Jack, "for then one of you might have been touting, and the other in the market, to give us the tip before it was too late."

"It's well, Jack, that all the world does not equal yourself in beauty, only rivalled by your impudence, my boy, or it would be uninhabited in a week, — all would expire from vanity. Take heed, my beautiful! beware of seed time, and back Cotherstone if at six to four, — it's plenty of odds."

"George! some stout and soda in a bucket," sobbed Fatty, just emerging out of a troubled doze."

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The scene is now laid at York, in a sporting public-house kept by a punch-bellied, short-legg'd, bald-headed old turfite, who draws good ale, and the ten-pound constituency of old Ebor to perfection. He has just drawn his Derby Lottery as well, and is winding up the sports of the evening, by a "dip in the bag," — as he calls a "little go" he has established. Each horse's name is written on a separate piece of paper, roll'd up and shaken in a bag, into which you ram your hand on speculation, draw, — and if you choose take a hundred to one (no great odds, there being about a hundred and sixty horses in the entry,) about your chance.

After about a score had drawn, flattered or disheartened by the names they became the proprietors of, a sharp aquiline-nosed gentleman, from Manchester, said, "Well, Sparling, I take five hundred to five about my draw."

"Done!" said the presiding heap of humanity: "I'll lay it you to *ten,* if you loike."

"Very well — here goes! a thousand to ten — now for luck, or never will I try more."

The hand is plunged into the bag — all rush to him of the aquiline — "Cotherstone!" exclaimed

they all, in a tornado of excitement, — "the favourite, by jingo!"

"Nay, lads," says Sparling, mopping his reeking caput, "that *canna* be, for he's not i' bag!"

The name had been written for the occasion, *palmed,* but not palmed off effectually, as old Boniface had had an eye to his own interest also, having omitted "the favourite" in his list of prizes.

Sparling's maternal uncle was the celebrated "old" Tommy Towers "of Clapham Town end," and had taught his nevoy a trick worth two of that.

Now let us take a peep at the corner, on the *Sunday!*

"What's Gaper's price?" said a very distinguished, elegant-looking fellow of the true English countrified cut of a gentleman, — a cut, let me tell you, it is in vain to look for in any other part of the world that ever I saw. Consummate cleanliness, joined to exquisite taste in dress, is the peculiar feature that strikes you. The gentle voice, quiet composed manner, and harmonious natural look, add a charm and finish to the beauty of countenance that is certainly only found in the higher classes in England. I am endeavouring to form a collection of facts, and am far too matured to have any remaining tinge of prejudice about me, I firmly believe — besides, knowing it would defeat my object, I should naturally discard it — but I say with truth — the perfect "air noble," beauty of mouth, eye, complexion, bust, teeth, and hands in both sexes alike, are only to be found (in

the mass, of course, always be it understood,) in Great Britain.

I met a very pretty American woman lately, with whom I had some conversation about good looks, saying, with justice, how much they had reason to boast of them in her own vast country.

She replied, "I thought so, till I arrived in London; but there you have such skin, complexion, and figures, that we know nothing of in America." She was as generous as she could well afford to be, and I have not the least doubt spoke as she thought.

However, "What's Gaper's price?" inquired the tall man, in leather trousers, a maroon double-breasted coat, with club-buttons, and large fawn-coloured cravat; "I've not quite done yet, and can take the odds to a thousand."

"Beggar my looks!" said a little *very anxiously smiling* elderly man, in long gaiters, and black frock coat of the old chaise driver, or Sir Tatton's length of lap; "this is coming it *too* strong to be pleasant. I'm clean forty thousand agin him."

"What 'll you take, my Lord?" asked Sunflower; "I ll lay you five thousand to two that 'Cotherstone' beats him."

"Thank ye, it will not suit my purpose. I'll take six thousand to one, outright."

"Beggar his long limbs!" said the little old fellow in the jarvey's coat; "he'll make his spindle-shanked brute first favourite yet. I must get Gully to see him before he springs him to even betting—

though he has no more chance on his merits than a man in boots."

"I'll lay a thousand to ten against naming the three winners," said old Crocky, paddling his way into the ring with a fin turned almost behind him.

"I'll lay five to one, bar one," bauled Leather-lungs.

"What, against Scott's two?" inquired a little man from York, fully four feet nothing.

"They don't *win*, for a hundred," said a sulky-looking trader from the East.

"They *do!*" yelled the little man, in a paroxysm of excitement.

"Done."

"Done."

"Hoy'll lay agean, Doompling," said old Crutch.

"If you *can*," put in a tall seedy-looking man, with an audacious look, and glass stuck in his eye; "say if you *can*, old Blowhard."

"Hollo!" exclaimed twenty voices at once, as a man stuck a piece of paper over the fire-place; "here's something scratched." (Vide copy.)

"Aristides pulled up lame after a gallop this morning, leaving it doubtful as to his starting, though he will run if it is possible."

"(Signed)—EGLINTON."

This prompt, straightforward, honourable conduct was equally worthy the horse and his noble owner—both being truly out of "rectitude;" though it would

have done you good (or harm) to have heard the backers of "Aristides" shower their abuse and contempt upon the latter for an act of racing honesty, nay, it may safely be called chivalry, which they could little appreciate. His lordship lost heavily by the speedy declaration, as he might have kept the accident snug, and thereby have "got his money off," as it is termed; but he gained everlasting honour on the turf—proving he had no cross of "Greenacre" about him!

The papers now "take up the running," logging all the flash bets, bewildering side talk, adding their own opinion, with at length a prophecy of the actual winner, some in prose, others in racing song. All this is greedily devoured in town and country, and in many instances acted upon, by speculators, who hope thereby to "woo the fickle jade."

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As I have said before, there is a small knot of the initiated dramatis personæ, who neither require "touts," newspaper information, nor prophecy to influence their line of action. They have made a lot of horses *safe*, and "*welt* at them" on the quiet, through a ramified and masonic confederacy, to which the "Four Seasons" and other secret revolutionary societies in France, are an "open court."

You tread on pit-falls, if you open your mouth—they are hidden beneath the Turkey carpet of your club, the pavement of "the Mell," at the covert side, or in the House of Commons,—for, at all these

places, there are men who have got "the speech"—as the diploma is termed—quite ready to "book" you.

Give all alike a wide berth, and then you may avoid the fireships, for like your slaver they hoist any colour they think proper—and, as the Vampire fans his sleeping victim, as he drains his life's blood, so the accomplished emissary of the clique will lull your fears with words of hearty friendship—aye, and pledge you to the brim—grinding all the time his deadly fangs, as with the eye of a basilisk, he watches the opportunity to make his spring, failing like the far more harmless snake, to give you the least warning by a rattle.

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LETTER XXVI.

SCENES IN THE "GREAT DRAMA." — AMUSEMENTS IN FRANCE. — MY FRIEND AND VALET, IN THE "RUE DE LA COQUETTERIE." — "THE DUKE OF LIMBS," WITH *HIS* VALET. — HIS GRACE'S TOILET.— STUD BULLETINS. — PROBABILITIES, AND ONE IMPROBABILITY.

As innumerable incidents occur in daily life, whether of a tragical or opposite nature, that far exceed any attempt at fictitious rivalship, so the most complete change of scene, in every thing relating to the world and its inhabitants, is effected in a few hours' sail, in a manner that puts all pantomimic shiftings immeasurably in the back ground.

Centuries of intercourse have not altered the extraordinary peculiarities of the two countries, divided by the comparatively trifling channel, in the minutest feature; and the more a man sees of each the more convinced will he become of this truth. It is not in language, manner, habit, and disposition, in which the French and English alone differ; but in every mental shade and attribute, whether the pulse is on the stretch or in a relaxed state, under every phase and circumstance of life, if you are only an observer close enough to detect it.

Nothing illustrates a nation's peculiarities so effectually as a correct insight into the way in which

they severally amuse themselves. All men make an invoice out pretty much alike, and the common enemy regulates office hours; but when a man, or twenty, have each a day, or an hour or two, with means for the occasion at their disposal without dictation, the natural bias of the mind is shown in the freedom thus allowed it for action. I have watched for any thing like a rural, manly, rough, invigorating game or field sport here in vain, nor have I found anything like a reading room, or institute for the mechanic or his class, in the various towns I have resided in France. I see groups of hundreds sipping black coffee, and by the way brandy too, in anything but petits verres, playing a monotonous, stupid hand at dominoes or piquette with cards made for dolls one would imagine from their diminutive size. I hear an immense chatter on all occasions: there are three fellows now under my window, *called* labourers, whose tongues rattle on every subject a great deal faster than their spades. I have watched these fellows narrowly for several days, and would not give half-a-crown a day for the three; they lean on their pickaxes and shovels every third minute to have a "jaw," shaking their hands in their paroxysms of eloquence as if it was a quarrel, instead of the usual yearning to talk instead of work. I see a vast flourishing of hats, loathsome salutations amongst the men, and hear a great scraping of fiddles in the various salles for dancing, but no otter

hunt, cricket match, or any out-door amusement whatever.

In summer the sun is suffocated by tobacco smoke, and the gods edified by ravishing language in the various tea gardens; but even then, there is no manly attempt at sporting introduced.

So far, I have alluded to people who may not have their whole time at their disposal, but who still show their national "penchant" so plainly that it cannot be mistaken.

For the gentry in the two countries, with means to assist the will, I cannot imagine a greater contrast than I fancy I *could* draw, if I were to try, and to, or from the life, for I have only one pencil in my knapsack, and don't understand colouring in the least.

Here goes, then!—

Mount with me "au seconde," in the Rue de la Coquetterie, where resideth a friend, and listen to the dulcet tones of a spindle-shanked valet-de-chambre, who, about noon, does himself the felicity to enquire if Monsieur, his master, will use papers or the irons this morning? having all the apparatus for hair-dressing in one hand, with a cup of "café au lait" and "petit verre" in the other.

"Ah, Jules!" sighs the elegante, robed in brocade; "Je suis bien malade, I suffer from punch and too much love,—sweetest Adèle! I die for you,—Oh! my head—sacré mille tonnerres! Je suis maladif."

"Courage, Monsieur!" replied Jules; "the café and a good curling will revive you."

"Allons, mon cher valet, a man must do his duty, les papillotes, apres le petit verre. Adèle! Le Diable! I have a pistol match this morning, and could not hit my gardrobe at present. Have you received my dress for the bal masqué to-night?"

"Oui, Monsieur,—it is superbe, charmante! Monsieur will kill every body, dressed so bewitchingly."

"Ah, sacré, villain! you lug my ringlets! doucement, mon cher Jules."

"Pardon; Monsieur must be mistaken — ah! la blanchisseuse."

"Entrez; Mademoiselle, pray be seated, and tell me the news.—

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Now come with me to breakfast with the Duke of Limbs on Nottingham Forest. 'The "Quorn" meet at 'Bunney,' fully twenty miles from his Grace's house, so we must be moving."

Don't imagine I am coming Cooper or Willis over you, and boasting of Dukes before breakfast without knowing them,—rather let me explain.—There is a song in Nottinghamshire, in praise of Jack Muster's hunt, one verse of which runs—

> "Here comes a fellow, all muscle and bone,
> Great Duke of Limbs! with a line of his own."

An appropriate title, as you would say if you knew

him, for he has limbs that would people a street in Paris — not blubber and troufles — but literally, all muscle and bone, with a figure-head, and cut-water, in happy keeping with the goodly hull."

"He has a white table-cloth generally round his neck, (this is not one of your be-satin'd gentlemen,) and a pair of whiskers, reminding one of a very large hair-brush stuck on each cheek. He is, moreover, just as good a fellow as ever tally-ho'd a fox, or followed a hound, with a heart in his belly of the old English sort — 'Always ready to kiss, or to fight,' and to sing 'Oh, the roast beef of Old England,' and to dine on the English roast beef."

"You must do the invisible with me, and listen again."

"Six o'clock, sir, and raining beautifully," said a bullet-headed domestic, accoutred in long leathern gaiters, and clean brown holland stable jacket; placing at the same time a lighted candle and hot water on his Grace's dressing-table, and a pair of exquisitely cleaned top-boots on the hearth-rug, on a heavenly January morning.

"Glorious, Will! frost quite gone?"

"Clean, sir. (Will knew his place, and did not take liberties by calling names.) "Mild as May, sir; scent can't fail to lay to-day. I've sent the Splasher on to covert — it was his turn — did I do right, sir?"

"Curse him! I suppose I must take him, then.

Not a butcher, dragoon, or madman, will buy the brute, so I must ride him."

"Splasher has his good points too: he can gallop in dirt, if his ears are only out, and would not refuse at a furnace," said his Grace, throwing out a thigh, covered with buckskin, very like a bauk of timber.

"With as much mouth as a bull, sir," said Will, grunting, and thrusting at the button-hook. — "If you please, sir," added he, "Mrs. Bangup dropp'd a colt last night as big as many yearlings, and I expect Miss Foote to tumble in pieces before morning."

"Capital, Will!" said the Duke, now lathering himself up to the eyes. "Luck never comes singly. How's Belzebub's stob?"

"Consarn him, it madders nicely, but will not stir yet."

"I'll poultice it again when you're gone, sir."

"Do, Will (giving the upper cut with his razor). I'll ride Hellfire Jack to morrow: — order lots of bacon frying, for I expect two fellows to breakfast, who will eat a flick, besides the pasty."

"Yes, sir," said Will. "If you please, sir," added he, looking very sheepish, "Forking Robin's been at Lady Lushington."

"D—n Forking Robin!" said his Grace, plunging his head into a large bowl of water, with as many lumps of ice floating in it as if the bucket had been dipp'd in Baffin's Bay."

"I'm sure, sir," said Will, "it was no fault of mine."

"D—n Forking Robin!" repeated the Duke, sobbing, and rousing his whiskers with a towel, large and coarse enough for the gaff of a cutter. "Order the bacon, and draw a tankard of ale, — Lady Lushington's in luck's way, and so is Bestow."

Here the loud crack of a whip, and "yoi, yover!" were heard before the windows of the house, though it was scarcely light, announcing the arrival of men for breakfast, which the Duke answered by a view halloo that made the curtains in the room shake as if struck by a tornado, thrusting himself at the same time into an old scarlet coat, and tumbling down stairs whooping at every step.

So much for the "Rue de la Coquetterie," and Ramsdale House. Can contrast go further? Fancy Thiers and Guizot playing leapfrog together in the Palais Royal; Mahomet in person eating bergoo on board an oysterdredger; Rothschild sweeping the crossing in Grace-Church Street; or anything that would seem to be improbability, improbable. All would be on the cards, compared to the chance of seeing the Duke of Limbs seated opposite his washerwoman at noon with a French barber putting his hair in papillotes; or, more unlikely still, to see the hero of the Rue de la Coquetterie riding the Splasher. — I tried him once, but no more, dear Jack, from yours faithfully, as we say when scribbling the polite.

LETTER XXVII.

GRATITUDE AT AN ESCAPE. — SCENE AT HAVRE. — AN AFFAIR OF "MOULDS." — STATE OF ALL CATHOLIC COUNTRIES. — "THE QUORN" AT BUNNEY. — CHOICE BETWEEN THE "SPLASHER" AND "HELL-FIRE JACK." — MY FRIEND "WILL." — MARTYRDOM. — "CRIPPLE'S GAUSE." — A PURL. — THE DUKE AND "FORKING ROBIN."

YES! I tried him once, Jack, and return thanks, I assure you, on being able to tell the tale, as devoutly as ever sailors lighted "short sixes" to the Virgin, in this country, after escaping storm, tempest, and short commons. I saw a dozen hairy, half-swipy-looking fellows, the other day, with bare heads and feet, each with a "long three" lighted, (it being an affair of "moulds,") following a chanting old gentleman in bombazine, up the "Rue de Paris," at Havre, to fulfil a vow they had made, when cutting up the cook, above all people, for "potage" and 'rôti" in the Pacific Ocean.

It had a strange look for 1846, and I could not help moralizing, more deeply than I will at present describe.

Of all sins, I am convinced the one of hypocritical, outside devotion, or religious humbug, is the very greatest in the eye of our Maker, — and when accompanied by waste and absurdity, too ridiculous

for the inmates of Bon Sauveur to approve of, I cannot help believing, but that his hatred of the hypocrisy will be only equalled by disgust at the folly of his creatures, especially in imagining they can deceive Him.

It was a scene "got up" for the world, not for the sake of true religion, which hides itself in modesty and humiliation, and is far too acute and deep-seated a feeling, to be able to bear, much less court the gaze of the smokers and spitters in the "Rue de Paris," who thought as much of the display, candles, bare-feet, latin, and all, as we do when we hear the "O Yes! O Yes!" of the crier of the court, bawled out in his address to all manner of persons. Bah! these spectacles sicken me, though they *should* be of infinite service in the appeal they make to reason and common sense, to pronounce their verdict, in spite of all the seceders to the Church of Rome, lately gazetted in the English papers. If it is true that such men have gone over — let them go! we are better without them; for of all crews, — one that can subscribe to pulling their shoes off in December, and trying a French pavement, burning candles in daylight, when most likely short of dips at home, as well as to thousands of trivial points, in the Roman Catholic articles of war — that would make Goose Gibbie ashamed of acknowledging, I repeat, such a crew will only eventually sink the ship and ruin the owner.

I am content to look at the mighty globe at large, for a guide-mark and assurance, that we may continue to walk and pray in our shoes, as we have hitherto done, in Great Britain. I see the "Place de Grève!" and men yet alive, who have taken a joyful part in carnage on their fellow-countrymen, —ay, and on women, and children! that the "Crows and Blackfeet" savages would sicken at, with every belief in my mind, that the relish for such horrors still exists, and only waits the occasion. I see Spain in anarchy, terror, ignorance, and confusion; Ireland in distress, that no human legislation seems to have the power to relieve — in idleness, squalor, and superstition; where selfish agitation, cant, and murder stalk unchecked through the fair and lovely land. I see Mexico, all but a prey to America; and could go to other priest-ridden countries, that writhe under the yoke of man's hellish ungovernable passions, and the unmistakeable displeasure of God! but it is not necessary. All can see it if they *will*, and if they *won't*, no allusion to the truth will be heeded.

* * * * * *

To our "Mutton and the Splasher."

My friend, the Duke, had long promised me a mount on any horse I chose to select out of his very amiable stud, premising that I should "go like a shot" on whichever I should be lucky enough to bestride myself.

One evening, *after* dinner, I decided, in a reckless moment, to accompany him to Bunney Park, the seat

of Lord Rancliffe, to meet "the Quorn." "Hell-fire Jack" and the "Splasher" were on the lawn, when we cantered up on our hacks, with my old friend "Will" in charge. After a hasty mouthful at one of the very best spread hunting breakfasts I ever saw, I slyly went out to reconnoitre the cavalry, leaving the Duke soaking his whiskers in a huge flagon of spiced ale, with roasted crabs, and rosemary floating in it, flank'd by a cold pork pie, in which he had made an incision large enough to put even *his* hand out of sight.

I got quietly to the old groom, and after putting on a very resolute, forty minutes' look, — which, God help me, I little felt, I said, "Well, Will, it seems likely to be a fine day, after all, which of these two animals would you advise me, now, as a stranger, to select, as his Grace is kind enough to let me take whichever I like?"

Will scratched his head, and (curse the fellow!) gave a most extraordinary twitch with his mouth, that denoted hilarity too hearty to be laughed it. He hid his face under the flap of the "Splasher's" saddle, as he pretended to girth him up, and then said —

"Why, his Grace *is* a kind gentleman, but darn it, he has not left you much choice this time. 'Hell-fire Jack' will run away with our master hisself, when he likes, and he, you know, sir, could pull that there tree up by the roots, as easy as I could a stick of celery, — and as for the 'Splasher!' why, he's the devil!"

This was true comfort for a man whose leg had been broken only about a year before, "all to pash," as Will said — and anything but a "bruiser" at the best. I was in a "fix," as the Yankees say, but too game to show it. "I'll take the chestnut," said I, "to be going on with, and if I can't manage him, I'll try the other."

"Why, burn my breeches," said Will, "but you have a good heart, sir!" *Very!* thought I, and mounted.

The Duke here made his appearance, licking his lips, and cracking his whip, to make his cursed brutes more wicked than ever — as I firmly believe. He also mounted, and set off at a gallop over the park, followed like anything mad, by myself, on "Hellfire Jack," till we got to the covert, where my troubles commenced in earnest. The horse I was on was without the least exaggeration, fully sixteen three, of a fretful, wilful, spiteful temper, as ever a fiend was blessed with; — he would not stand still an instant, and was ever on the look-out for something to jump, or some animal to kick at.

"D—n you! Keep your own line," was shouted at *me*, by every one alike. I seemed the equal terror and amusement of the field, the Duke having made them pretty well aware of my position, and the prowess to be looked for.

"We found Jack!" and I thought my hour was come! "Give him his head!" roared his Grace,

"doesn't pull an ounce," "goes like a shot!" and, by the Lord Harry! I *did* go like a shot. The horse was a magnificent jumper, and no man breathing could help sitting him, he was such a complete master of his work — but, Lord! how he pulled! I was absolutely sick, — the muscles of my arms became in lumps, my fingers closed hermetically, as the learned say — and if we had not fortunately come to a check, I must have fallen to the ground from sheer fatigue.

His Grace of Limbs was close alongside, looming like a clover stack on fire. "Sweet nag! isn't he?" remarked he.

"*Very!*" said I, dismounting — "now for your promise, Duke, let us change tits."

"With all my heart, old boy!" said he; "each is so good, that I never know till I have tried both, which I love best."

After taking up about a dozen holes in the stirrup leathers, in Mister "Splasher's" saddle, I mounted that most heavenly quadruped. I have often thought since I must have been mad that morning: however, away we went over a vile, rotten, deep country, apparently intersected with tremendous fences — for a fixture, they told me, was "Cripple's Gause" (*true*, though ominous). Here I became quite a character, and was approached by several of the Duke's friends, who politely complimented me on my mount.

"Splendid jumper!" said one.

"Swims like a shark," said another.

"Never was known to *refuse*," remarked a third.

"I'll lay you two glasses of ale at the next public," said my friend Hieover, "that he spills you at the first fence."

"Done!" said I, like a man (and a fool).

The Splasher was a delightful contrast to his stable companion from the infernal regions, being with hounds in covert as placid, tractable, and, curse him! as deceitful as Mr. Calcraft, who does the last honours, and loathsome, of the Old Bailey.

He ambled about with his head between his legs, though not pulling in the least, — with one eye fixed constantly on yourself, and the other on the look-out for a fence.

"D—n that hound, he's going to find!" I uttered in agony to myself, as I heard a whimper in the gorse, that sounded like "gospel," as Will Danby expressed himself, when he heard the present Archbishop of York halloo away a fox, and prepared for "martyrdom."

"Don't point him at any thing that you particularly dislike," shouted the Duke, rushing like a rocket at a double post and rail,—"such as houses or trees; take at least a hundred yards to consider, or ——" I could hear no more, for I was within fifty yards of a rasping stake and bound fence, with a ditch like a canal on each side, at which the "Splasher" went at the rate of ten thousand miles an hour, head down, tail

up, you might as well have pulled at the "Great Britain" with Fanny Ellsler's garter: — we crashed through or over, I forget which, and then came to a full stop, — the "Splasher," thinking he had finished the business, after he had jumped the fence, and pitched me at least twenty yards *clean* over his head, amidst the roars of the Duke and a select party he had invited to see the fun.

"The nearest turnpike road to Nottingham, my esteemed friend," said I to an interesting gentleman, cutting turnips: "please to open that gate, whilst I turn this brute's head the other way, or he will take it at the posts without asking your leave or mine."

You will agree with me, Jack, when I think I have reason to be grateful in being thus able to scribble to you, and so I am; but not more so, than I shall be at seeing my good friend, the Duke of Limbs, once more, particularly as I hear he has changed his stud; — though "Forking Robin" still crops the spangled mead at Ramsdale, always like his worthy owner, — ready to do the amiable to all comers, like a true old English Gentleman of the olden, as well as, thank God, the present time.

LETTER XXVIII.

POLITICAL UPROAR IN ENGLAND. — FRANCE AND LORD PALMERSTON. — THE LATE PREMIER. — HORSE PLAY. — EARLY ASSOCIATIONS. — DANGEROUS FRIENDSHIP. — A GENERAL ELECTION. — THE RETURNED M. P. — THE HONOUR OF BEING AN ENGLISHMAN. — OUR INSTITUTIONS. — FEAR OF "MISSING STAYS." — RUMINATING. — RETROSPECT. — THE "SPINNING JENNY." — THE GENERAL RESULT. — JOINT-STOCK BANKING. — DANDIE DINMONT AND HIS FRIEND. — WHAT IS MONOPOPLY? — A QUESTION OR TWO ASKED. — A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM ABROAD. — THE LEADING ARTICLE. — NEWSPAPER INFORMATION. — REASONS FOR LEAVING THE BY-LANES. — WASHINGTON IRVING. — BRITISH COMMERCE. — THE DUKE OF RICHMOND. — FOREIGN FARMING. — THE GUIDE MARKS OF LIFE. — "HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS."

Dec. 1845.

I SEE, you are once more in a glorious uproar in England, and I sincerely wish you well through it. I perceive little Lord John is gazetted *chef de bataillon, vice* the great "Sir Plausible," who retires, with, very probably, the charms of a general election in prospective, and a total repeal of the corn-laws the result; at least so we are told on this side of the water. After this change of scene in the great political drama, the word "impossibility" must be recalled, and a new one coined in its stead, as it can be no longer admissible in our language or country,

viewing the events of the last few days. Here, as usual, every one is talking incessantly, forming conjectures and surmises that it is amusing in the extreme to hear put into words. The papers are wild with excitement, some expressing themselves most violently and ridiculously. All alike seem to regret the loss of Lord Aberdeen, as the whole world may do, with much reason, and to set their bristles and dry their powder at the very name of Palmerston, whose exquisite toilet (so important an affair to a Frenchman) will not even let him go down. He is absolutely detested in France, from the proper spirit he shewed when foreign secretary formerly; for with all the outcry against him, that is the sum of his offence, and nothing else. He is too gentlemanly to be quarrelsome, and far too much so, to put up with an insult, and would have been considered very nearly perfect, before sneaking and truckling became so fashionable; which spaniel-like diplomacy will be carried a point too far some day, unless it is the wish of John Bull himself to be duly rung and chained by people quite ready and willing to bait him.

Lord Palmerston, is as *au fait*, in the office again given him by rumour as his varied career and great natural quickness must have made him; and with the improved temper to be hoped for, from his late repose, it is impossible to find a more efficient man for service than he is. *But*, they will never shake hands with him in France, notwithstanding all

the merit he possesses; and of this he may assure himself every time he ties his cravat, which is sufficiently often, I take it, to keep the circumstance in his memory.

I recollect the late Premier coming into power on the very highest wave of pure unalloyed conservatism, having taken some little share in the stirring scenes he caused when appealing to the country.

All the landed gentry, farmers, and parsons lost their voices and appetites for weeks, from shouting at the different elections, carrying them at all points, and placing an overwhelming majority, their rent rolls, cheque books, and very souls in the hands of their new favourite. When the turmoil was over, they all reclined in *easy* chairs; Sir Robert had taken the helm, and with it the charge of their interests and affairs. Never was there such a cloudless horizon, or such sound and happy slumber: there was not a wish left to be gratified: even dyspeptic tithe recovered its complexion, and heiresses became in greater demand than ever. The Conservatives having thus manfully done their *devoir*, looked on at first in true complacency, patting their children's heads, and paying milliners' bills, as if indigestion was unknown, till the very slightest shade of doubt suddenly crossed their vision, that served only to deprive their senses of all credit, when they received a playful kick occasionally from their new and talented leader (albeit quite as severe as any thing a horse could give), but when at length he gave a

bishop or two a heavy, bursting fall, pitched into the farmers right and left, and cross-buttocked the Duke of Richmond himself, they began "to chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," and ask if all could be in *play*, as asserted by their belted champion. They had consoled themselves for a considerable time by saying "he would no doubt turn out all 'right in the end,'— that he was a very excellent fellow, with rather a queer way of *showing it*;" they remembered that he was Lancashire born, had been roughly nurtured, and perhaps could not help it. With this they kept a better look out at headquarters after their dangerous playmate, when "the old Duke" observed him secreting a "bowie knife," in his sleeve one day, when preparing for a regular bout, and instantly gave him into the custody of one of his own peelers. "Preserve us from our friends" has truly been proved a wise as well as ancient saw, in the moral Sir Robert has taught the country, from the friendship he has bestowed on his supporters, who may consider it a fortunate circumstance that his deadly weapons were discovered so soon, notwithstanding the contusions and black eyes he has given them in his pastime.

If the truth can ever be known, you may rest assured he never was thoroughly happy or at home in the society of the aristocracy, and that he sung many a time and oft (to himself) —

"My heart's in the factory,
My heart is n't *here*;".

but that he should so long have been able to delude men of acute observation and knowledge of the world and character, justly entitles him to exclaim with Tommy Lye, when dismounting from the "Queen of Trumps," after winning the Oaks rather unexpectedly, "If I am not a handsome man, at least I'm a gay deceiver."

If Sir Robert Peel had burst into life openly and at first avowing the love he felt for his manufacturing origin and home (which he feels eternally to his credit, though not having commenced *that way*, he does not at present know exactly how to acknowledge it with grace), as well as for the industrious honourable source from whence his wealth and present position in reality spring,— with this *amor manufactoræ* joined to his transcendant, almost unequalled talents, what a name he would have made in future history, — how Lancashire would have adored her gifted, affectionate, her glorious son! but, with the treachery to the party he pretended to fraternise with before her eyes, she dare not take him by the hand, — she does not know what he means or will do next. He may turn and kick or cross buttock his mother some day, as he assuredly *will*, if she allows him too much familiarity or elbow room. Of this she may rest assured, from the "up and down" propensities he has displayed already.

I fancy I can hear the din of preparation for the great struggle across the channel. The erection of

the hustings — the entrance of the candidates, — the flaming addresses,— all come vividly to my mind's eye. I once dearly loved a bit of electioneering, when young and very foolish, and am ashamed to say I almost long to be in the fray again. The excitement and bands of music,— the fun, fighting, and blue ribbands, — the canvassing the *women* for their husband's or brother's vote and interest (for *there* lies the secret),— the blue dinners, balls, and tea drinkings, — with the good-humoured rows, and speechifying out of windows,— made a general election glorious fun, while it lasted. It was delicious too, to observe the effect on poor human nature,— to see the acknowledged "lords of the creation" eating dirt, and bending the knee, before the "great unwashed," catechised by sweeps and mudlarks as to their principles! — the spruce, high-bred baronet, or gouty "used up," old big, wig, bowing, shouting, and shaking hands through a borough of fifty thousand inhabitants, the filthier the more welcome; forced up garret stairs to make a personal call, or rather "to pay their respects," in an atmosphere of horrors, wherein dwells the free and independent burgess; spending their money by sacks full, frequently just to lose by a vote or two, "better managed" on the other side. To witness the perjury, the griping, petty mean, gin-and-ale-drinking "freemen,"— to see the committee at work night and day, as if in a beleagured town receiving mysterious scouts and

messengers big with news and rumour,— the paid quiet lawyer, not caring a dip of his ink which way the event goes,— the town-agent without a name stopping at nothing to return his man ;— to witness in fact all the approved tactics displayed in a general election will alone enable you to form an idea of its boasted purity, as well as of the average morality of "the world." Meanwhile the church bells toll, the parsons pray, men are fined for being drunk, or, hung for murder as usual. The M. P. gives a farewell dinner, shakes hands most feelingly with his committee, and the cat's meat man, or scavenger, if they chance to be near the railway station, and in a week's time would drive over the whole lot, chairman and all, if they crossed before his cab in Cockspur street, and would put up his glass, in very undisguised horror or ignorance, if accosted by a voter, however respectable, whom he had hugged to suffocation and drank "purl" with during his contest. The most heartless, cold-blooded son of ingratitude is your returned M. P. ; and the most embittered, world-hating, victim to disappointment and bilious fever is the man "thrown out." I cordially hope, therefore, to have nothing to do with either for the future. My hustings cheering, alley-canvassing, garment-rending days, I trust, on this reflection, are over, leaving plenty of far more efficient fools to replace me.

It is impossible to describe the feeling of honest pride, almost amounting to pardonable exultation,

that must come over a man, with any heart or observation about him, when travelling abroad, and indulging himself occasionally with the reflection that he is an Englishman. Without drawing any overweening or ill-natured comparison between the sights before his eyes, or the absence of things he does not see and the remembrance of those he has left behind, the contrast is too great not to glare upon him so palpably as never to permit it to be forgotten.

The magnificence, grandeur, and, above all, the pure philanthropy of our public institutions though nearly equalled in many instances by the splendid monuments to princely private charity, are beyond all description, and vain indeed is it to look for even their shadow elsewhere. The noble pile at Greenwich, with the lovely modelled, invincible old "Dreadnought," anchored within brotherly hail in happy unison, as a refuge "for disabled seamen of *all* nations," meet the eye of the foreigner or returning emigrant to the land of his fathers, as he steams or sails up our beautiful Thames, in solid, cheering earnest of being at length in England!

Let him visit Chelsea, the Charter House, the Bluecoat, Rugby, and thousands of endowed schools; the Infirmaries and Hospitals for every ill that flesh is heir to, in every town alike; the various societies established by the humane and good; and, lastly, let him see the building in every parish, one more

despised and reviled at than the common jail, — that is made the handle for base political agitation — nevertheless, a house that is built and endowed by the *English law*, for the shelter and maintenance of *all* who cannot *provide these things for themselves*, — he will then know that his voyage is ended, and that he has arrived "at Home."

Such institutions as these in any country may well make a man proud of belonging to it: and when he looks at the fact of our unswerving public faith under all trials and bad debts abroad to an immense amount; our glory in arms, though moderation in conquest; our superiority in every branch of mechanism and art, and unheard-of liberality in furthering their career, as well as the undoubted general prosperity of the nation at large, — that grateful satisfaction is only equalled by the intense fear of some reckless, ill-advised political misadventure shaking the fair structure to the foundation, the very thought of which gives us ample cause to "take heed lest we fall!"

Sitting ruminating as I now do over my "brace of dogs," consuming their accustomed supper of tough elm faggots — with neither the cheer of the "Blues" nor the drum and fife of the Orange party in my ears, without the slightest interest with either, and very considerable acquaintance with both, I invoke the spirit of sober truth out of the cheerful crackling blaze, to enlighten my cogitations, whilst I endea-

vour to unravel the tangled skein you seem to have on your hands at present. I mean, of course, only so far as to try to arrive at the truth in forming my own opinion — one of the "rights of man," thank Heaven, to which we are all entitled, even if at variance with the leading article of the great "Times" itself.

It appears, on skipping through Hume, only "like yesterday" since king Rufus was slain; or, at all events, since our bluff king Hal chopped a few of his wives' heads off, and followed the chase at Windsor. Yet from that time to this present writing, we seem to have made some very extraordinary progress in "the tight little island," and but that prosperity (like gambling) knows no surfeit, it would be difficult to know what we would be at or are complaining about.

When William the Conqueror made his own terms with our rugged uncivilized kingdom, doing us the greatest favour in coming over from Normandy, he very properly and liberally rewarded his followers by grants of land, that in numberless instances remain in direct succession at the present day; others of the old Doomsday titles were soon after and have been ever since in the market, as Mr. Robins's oratory and advertisements have most eloquently recorded.

These within a quarter per cent. upon lands not used for the "hives of men" have been fixed stars in our comparatively trifling hemisphere, whilst the

halo, the comet, the fiery meteor of trade have alike passed over the heads of the contented unenvious gentry, in a career of uncontrolled splendour, of which the great "budget of the world" can alone give you the particulars.

It is little to say that the sons of commerce have floated upon a sea of bullion, freighted with profit to bursting hatches — they have subdued *worlds*, and established their counting-houses at the uttermost ends thereof. There are the Farquhars, Mileses, and a legion of others, all singly able to find a revenue for twenty continental princes, and leave themselves a very ample one in reserve.

The bankers in Great Britain are too numerous to allow a man time to count even their names, much less their gains, and are "marks for reference" on the page of our commercial history that are not very difficult to comprehend. Till at length the "Spinning Jenny" came sidling and coquetting on the scene, at first in bashful coyness, followed by the anxious gaze of a new order of artificers, that have eventually matriculated into the mill-owner or cotton lord of the present day, the origin of whom, greatly to the honour of the immortal "Figaro," I believe, in more instances than one, may be said to have sprung from the pliant loins of a barber.

These last have had a sad time of it! and feeling just cause to be indignant at the treatment they have experienced, are determined to be revenged. From

the starting-post of these gentry ("the pole with pewter basins hung") we have Arkwright, Evans, Strutt, Peel, Houldsworth, M'Connall, and *thousands* more such in the manufacturing directory, whose names and broken fortunes, alas! will be sufficient to inspire you with horror when you reflect on their hard fate and unrewarded exertions!

As for the shop-keeper, every villa with more green paint about it than usual, with the blue and orange decked gentleman at the gate (a livery wisely selected to suit both sides of the question), will tell you the melancholy results of his particular endeavours in retail.

In the mean time the jolly farmer rode home as usual from market after a good dinner, every item consumed being to the benefit of the community at large. The evening after the market-day found every one in improved funds and spirits, from the landlord to the under hostler who brought the nags to the door. So we went on, till the scheming fertile brain of our ever inventive people thought of a plan that would make this astounding era as nothing compared to the results that mountains of money would accomplish through "joint stock banking;" millions of pounds were therefore easily clubbed by millions of persons, which, when got together, after allowing any amount of familiarity at the hands of the gentlemen in office, in "cut away coats," had still a residue to be employed that required new

worlds for customers. Hence "false credit" was illegally begotten, and in due time were produced piles of made-up stuffs, exceeding in extent and height that of the Pyrenees or Andes, with a pressing call for buyers more heavy than either. Let us, for argument's sake, admit this to be true, and in good humour, without personality or imputation on any one, "reason together," and if you will permit me to ask one or two questions in this spirit, I shall be too ready to acknowledge my error if I make any, and have it corrected, if, by *conviction* produced by *common sense*, but not otherwise. Presuming that the party who is interested directly or indirectly in the welfare of the land has an equal right to strive for a return to *their* venture with the other, seeking to *improve* their own, (which, from the picture I have truthfully given, implies a desire for adding a perfume to the violet, or craving for "wasteful ridiculous excess,") we cannot be greatly surprised at one of the former saying to his friend Dandie Dinmont, as they lay their heads together in the chimney corner, "What neighbour, if from the reckless spirit of uncontrolled barter (which is pretty certain to be the case if the duty on foreign corn is taken away), a sufficient quantity of wheat should be brought into England, paid for in manufactures to suffice for the bread and pudding-eaters, *can* be done with the corn we grow? or where may we *calculate* upon looking for a market? A

man can but consume a certain quantity of bread a day — about a pound will amply satisfy him — will there be, therefore, any guarantee, that the produce of our farms will be taken, or needed at *all?* or in preference to any other country's crops, if appearing in neighbourly sacks or cargoes in the same market, and at an equal price? Honest Dandie replies, "No neighbour." If there *is* any guarantee at all, it will be, that Manchester, Glasgow, and all such places will totally supply themselves and all the rest of England (out of their great profits being enabled to give us little chance of competition if they choose to sell,) from America, the shores of the Baltic, or wherever they can force a trade in preference to dealing with us, because their mutual settling will in a manner compel them to do so, and with all their *good wishes* towards you and me, they will simply say, they are "full."

This anxiety on the part of the two humble sons of the soil, to know what they are to do with their annual crop, their means of existence, their *all* — though always offered at a European or reasonable price current, if the sliding scale is any test, which *it cannot fail to be,* is held up as the most heinous crime, in fact as the most loathsome instance of "monopoly" — a charge rather inconsistent, coming from men who told their indignant hearers the other day with tears in their eyes, that in consequence of the

Corn Laws being continued in England, a few manufactories had dared to appear in Germany and Switzerland, whose people would otherwise have been *compelled* to come to their marts and tender mercies! This is not keeping "a ring" as we do in England! nor is there much fair play shown in the strife, if, what is termed a crime in one class of men, is hugged as a virtue in their opponents.

What is to be the fate of land, bought and *paid* for in England, under the impression that sufficient protection would be afforded, to enable the cultivator or invester to compete with countries, not similarly placed with ours, in respect to a trifle of debt and other burthens, as well as having some little respect for the essential decencies of life, without looking at comforts, before a profit can be touched in the annual turning over of the capital and labour employed? What is to become of the money advanced on mortgage, at a very, very low rate of interest, though to the amount of millions that rate as well as the principal when required, are only forthcoming from the very slight protection given to the English landowner or farmer, in lieu of the burthens he bears, that are unknown to the foreign competitor? Are all these varied interests to be swamped, without ceremony or notice, to minister to the prosperity or ambition of any other particular class? What *can* become of the farm labourer? If badly paid now, what will be his

future fate? Are we not also liable to the caprice of foreign powers — to the chance of foreign dearth, when with no harvest at home to turn to in our need? Of having too much, or too little corn sent to a country, that *might* grow sufficient, and to spare, making a home trade worth all the foreign marts in the world; the absolute deficiency, in an average harvest, being now so contemptibly trifling, as to be easily made into a surplus, through extra attention. Why not rather improve, and cultivate every lost inch of ground in Britain? why not get wheat from Ireland, *as we might*, in such quantities, as to leave us under the necessity of exporting, and at all events make ourselves independent of foreign supply. This line of proceeding having at the same time some reasonable notion of an outlet for goods, *before* making them, would appear, to a thinking man, at a distance from England, as rather more sensible, than the wild, headlong course, now so in fashion, or rather so greatly "the rage."

If you regulate your answers to any of the questions I have put to you (in fairness I hope) by the newspapers, you will soon be enabled to instruct me; but do you ever think of asking, what spirit guides the pen that indites the elaborate, pithy, argumentative, leading article, in most of your daily journals, in advocacy of the instant repeal of the corn law? Is it some disinterested patriot, with ample funds, to defy suspicion of party bias? Is it some wise, reflec-

tive mind, whose owner has a five hundred acre farm, in Yorkshire, Durham, or Herefordshire, as well as an equal venture in smoke, steam, and cotton? A man who, above all interest, in either of these pursuits, with pure philanthropy for his aim — sees his way sufficiently to give his advice, that such a law is good, or such a one injurious to the land he loves so well. Is this the sort of man, from which emanates the long, apparently soul-convincing article, in proof of the enormity of continuing the protection given to those who have joined "the little island community," as purveyors of provisions, whilst others "keep shop," or do the professional, all parties knowing under what circumstances the community started into life, to follow their different callings; knowing the heavy hand that had been laid upon them in preceding years, from war and a brave defence, as well as (low be it spoken) some very foolish meddling in such matters, though all adding to their liabilities, and disadvantages in respect to competition, in *natural produce*, with people who had paid less, and suffered more?

If, when you take up these journals, you could imagine the deeply expressive language to proceed from a pen guided by the motives I have named, who would not be convinced of the wisdom, the holiness of the measure it so strongly advocates?

But whether it flows entirely from this patriotic animus, or is mechanically kneaded into words, "those

fickle daughters of the brain," to suit the *shading* of the pages in which they appear in all their flowery garnish, I leave to better anatomists of the subject than myself. It is one worthy the most careful dissection before an opinion is formed, much less an award given from evidence so open to sweet and pleasing sympathy.

The flavour of the League *employés* effusions is seasoned by a musical chink, for which he will libel the harvest of next year, in Terra del Fuego, Holderness, or Egypt, "*c'est egale;*" he will yell famine from pole to pole; bully the "praties" to the third and fourth generation, or anticipate the thermometer itself if accompanied by soothing strains that can charm the grey-goose quill, as well as "tame the savage breast;" and be assured the opportunity has not been neglected of testing his ear for music.

You may, perhaps, accuse me of leaving the beautiful by-lanes, heaths, and downs, through, and over which, we have so long rambled together in my Pedestrian Sketches, for the dusty overthronged highway of politics, from the strain I am any thing but *indulging* in. I assure you, on the contrary, I sincerely believe myself to be actuated by no motive, but for the love of "fair play" on all occasions; for the many transcendent beauties of nature, particularly in "Old England," and for those bold, genuine yeomen, who were once her pride and

support, and not, as now, of the last and least consideration; these, with our manor-houses, green fields, and sylvan population, will not be a welcome "sacrifice" in the eyes of men who, though divided from us by distant lands and seas, reflect without bias, interest, or passion. Men who know whence the elegance, the charm, the poetry of life, always took its rise; whence the nourishment to the arts and sciences ever proceeded; at whose hands innate courtesy and benevolence were ever to be found.

That most charming, simple, yet truthful describer of English life (dear old Washington Irving), gave a vivid sketch of the high-bred unassumption and urbanity he met with in our aristocracy, when honouring us with a visit that can never be too often repeated; contrasting it with the upstart, overbearing demeanour of the retired trader, that grated so harshly upon his acute observation. The fine handsome girls of the old baronet, squire, or earl, still walk over the fields to church, with their cottage bonnets, and cottage sympathy of heart, whilst the be-satined sugar boiler's portly dame makes the gravel and rustic congregation fly, as usual, before her bright, yellow, and green chariot wheels. Our traits in English character remain the same, unchanged and unchangeable.

God forbid I should be supposed to feel ought but admiration, wonder, and reverence, for the gigantic, honourable, irreproachable career of British

commerce, from its earliest date to its present unparalleled height and grandeur, as well as sincere respect for men, who I *know* possess too much liberality of sentiment, and gentlemanly feelings, ever to permit them to countenance or approve the system of gross personality adopted by "The League" in carrying out its illustrations, to call its style of oratory by no harsher term. I commenced by eschewing any thing like an expression that might be considered a breach of good manners, and will strictly keep to my bargain. But to these honourable men, sitting either in their counting-houses, or over their comfortable, most hospitable hearths, I appeal if it *is English?* if it is fair or decent in the leaders of this movement (however their own inclinations may lean) to hold up the Duke of Richmond, by name, to their reeking audience, of infuriated, or at all events excited partizans, as a "monopolising robber," thereby making an "absent countryman" a target for the general aim of malice and revenge?

Now we all know the Duke of Richmond to be a peculiarly amiable, honourable, and benevolent man, with a Waterloo bullet in his body, and as good, kindly, and genuine a heart as ever beat in the breast of an English gentleman. Can, then, this be allowed, even to further the project of the League? Forbid it manhood! forbid it England, as the gallant, honest little island will and *does!*

The interest of the merchants, manufacturers, and general trader is equal to that of "our green fields;"

but not a jot more weighty, and with none of the beauty, association, and endearment that so hallows every one of them.

I have been too much abroad, and seen the way the best farmers exist (for they do not live), know their habits, the trifling expense they are at, the superior climate, and natural resources of the soil, as well as their comparative freedom from taxes, ever to hope to see our "green fields" and well-trimmed hedge-rows as they are now, if messieurs of the sabot, anti-shirt, and razor school of agriculture are admitted into Wakefield market on equal terms with men who once thought it no treason to aspire to be very efficient members of society, as they are, thank God, *and will long, long continue.*

Whilst on foreign farming, it may be well to mention that there will be millions of acres made available for wheat all over the world whenever the market is opened to induce the necessary outlay, which new farms will be worked by men who neither read nor write, nor desire to do either, who live in filth and darkness from preference, but who can scatter corn in the ground quite as well as we do, gather it, and send it over the Channel in a galliot, which is sailed at an equally cheap rate, and with whose fare and slop-chest I hope our "foul-weather Jacks" will never be expected either to compete or put up with. Still dealing in generalities, I must wind up my yarn, and give you the result of my cogitation over my wood fire, which I do in all humility, as I have said before,

entirely free from any thing like a political motive, but with a sincere and lasting love for every thing countrified—that I acknowledge from my heart, and trust to have for my dying guest.

In all the great guide-marks of life we naturally look to the long past ages to furnish us with examples and instruction, and are seldom led far astray by the general rule and moral they so silently yet so truthfully inculcate. We look for particular traits in character in particular men as we look for snow from the north, or for spring to follow the winter, and have never yet heard, "by tale or history," of a professional agitator, whose acknowledged aim was not self-interest at the bottom. To discover the philosopher's stone, or real elixir vitæ (above proof), would be child's play, in comparison to the search, for one actuated by a pure, genuine disinterested motive; hence the caution and doubt with which all men alike ought to receive any measure forced by such advocates.

The rough inequalities of life, notwithstanding the picture I have given you of our gentry, merchants, manufacturers, and shopkeepers (all true to the letter), I am afraid will be the same when centuries have rolled away, and our present street eloquence is forgotten, but to be replaced by other "members of the profession."

The worldly "El-dorado" promised to the poor people, whose time is thus grievously wasted in having their "hopes too fondly nursed, too rudely crossed,"

is only equalled by the "happy hunting grounds" of the Indian's future aspirations, and, like this buffalo-chasing paradise, is quite as difficult, or rather more so, to discover. The weary heart-sick pilgrim, struggling in vain to pass the rocky mountains of "Impossibility," leaves his bones to whiten in the howling wilderness of disappointed hopes, and fruitless, unavailing sighs, whilst the eloquent pourtrayer of this land of sirloins and idleness hides his face in his sleeve, and quietly, though securely, buttons his breeches-pocket; as Sir William Temple says, "A restlessness in men's minds to have something they have not, and be something they are not, is the root of all immorality."

NOTE TO LETTER XXVIII.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, in reference to this letter, that the "devils" in Paternoster Row were completely outpaced by the scene-shiftings in the great political drama lately enacted. The MSS., though scribbled and posted in due course, became as an old Almanack "by return."

However, as it was in the publisher's hands long before *the* debate, or even the end of the Premier's touching flirtation, the writer has no mind to alter it; his sympathy with the subject is doubly cemented from the little corroborative chat that has taken place in reference to it. Though he would be delighted "beyond measure" to be enabled, in some future note, to acknowledge himself *mistaken*.

THE END.

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